

# A DREAM

J. C. Robinson

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**A dream. :An epic poem. /By Joseph Carve**



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# A DREAM.

AN EPIC POEM.

BY

JOSEPH CARVER ROBINSON.

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J. C. ROBINSON, PUBLISHER,

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## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

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For fear some evil minded person might wantonly misconstrue my flights of fancy, wherein I have that power, Monopoly, seize on creation, as being irreverent, I will say I cast no slighting reflections on the Omnipotent; but I wish to show what vast proportions a Monopoly would assume if not alone confined to our little world of suffering.

This work was printed for private distribution, but having several hundred copies in excess of my pleasure to distribute as a private edition, I offer them to the public.

J. C. ROBINSON.

As in this poem I have pictured the future of Monopoly, I would respectfully dedicate it to the Independent Oil Man and to all those whose sympathy and efforts go forth to oppose and crush out Monopoly from our midst.

J. C. R.



## A DREAM.

---

A WONDROUS dream my mind conceived,  
at first

It gave me joy beyond all hope. There seemed  
No bound of perfect bliss that mind could draw  
So fair as this; the darkest night was turned  
To day, and Heaven's sylvan shades and nooks  
Were enwrapped by gold'n streams of living  
brooks.

Then, there were no pains in the depths of Hell  
As did my troubled soul indwell.

I dreamed I'd turned the world into a fount  
Of Oil, and wov'n the silken stream of gold

And green into vast wealth, by a long  
Continuous dream.

My greedy mind, with ease  
Expanded to the work, until rivers  
That used to be, turned to Oil. So all waters,  
Even the sea !

Methought the world's last days had come ; the  
race

Of struggling man was run. Had not the Lord  
My soul giv'n strength, the troubled horrors  
That reached me from the very highest peaks  
Where suffering humanity had scaled,  
I should have lost heart and let slip my soul  
From its mortal part, such dire horrors mocked  
me !

I trembling stood, as one dumb-bound.  
Here, struggling in the sea, a doomed life,  
Buff'ing the dark'ned stream with lusty sinews,

Fighting in vain 'gainst death. There, men of  
sin,  
Half-demon, half-dev'l, who through life were  
hunted,  
Hated, and outlawed, pleading for the boon  
That had made them miserable!

Amid human wail this small speck of earth  
In blackened space whirled as a great Oil Bubble,  
Drowning man in his sin. As I alone reigned  
Supreme on this gold'n wave, a smiling greed  
Filled my brain. I forgot the horrors I'd seen,  
And gloated o'er my Oily Sea of wealth,  
This translucent liquid of living green.

The world was mine! All this great Oil Bubble!

My countless wealth now seemed most secure,  
As humanity no longer did endure.

I'd heard their last groans and seen their death-  
throes ;

They'd sunk beneath the waves to death ; the  
waves

Obliterated the scene of doom,

Leaving no trace to mark their tomb.

I stood monarch of all this vast plain ;

Was the rich harvest worth the lives I'd slain ?

Yes ! why not ? I'd crushed a mortal foe's de-  
sire,

And quenched in them a most rebellious fire.

Rid the world of sin by sacrificing blood,

Merely rep'tition of another flood.

Ha ! ha ! they were loth to swamp in my spoil,

If their souls were light they could swim in Oil.

How quickly they shot to the core of Hell !

For them, a fitter place there's none to dwell.

Then, an awful stillness fill'd the heavy air.

In this death-like quiet my bark drifted

As a thing of ease ; so still one scarce could  
Hear the rippling of the seas ; erewhile,  
The frantic shrieks of man nigh drove me  
mad —

Now the awful silence seemed quite as bad.

“ But why disheartened ? ” I asked myself.

“ I have caused misery without pity :

I’ve crushed Titusville, Bradford, Oil City —

Hundreds of towns by honest toil that reared

Their heads from the product of Oil. I took

Millions from the land and left it as bare

As a babe’s hand ; took the substance of the earth

And put it into my purse ; I blighted

The country as with a curse, without one

Pang of remorse.”

When the people

Had no woe, they were thoughtless of the mor-  
row.

This was the time I laid my plans to pluck  
The joy from the heart of man, thus reaping  
Their harvest, by a sharp turn, that they'd  
    toiled  
For years to earn.

'Twas the clinking  
Of the drill in  
The flinty rock,  
And the genius  
Of a Drake gave  
The world a shock.

I loved the doleful sound of the walking-beam,  
As it echoed over wood and vale and stream.  
I loved the rustic scenes of long ago,  
The hills that spouted Oil in steady flow.

Methinks I hear the sound of jar, and thud  
Of drill ; note the running of the sand-reel.

I hear the sand-pump in the well below ;  
(This sand-pumping, Oil unto me doth show.)  
Hear the rattling of the bull-wheel, letting  
The tools down the well. See ! the walking-  
beam

Is lowered, and the temper-screw is set,  
Driller at his post, but work's not moving  
Yet. Now the walking-beam is in motion !  
Up and down it goes, drilling the soft rock  
And the hard, till into the Oil-sand it goes.

I hear the sound of gas from below,  
Hear the pent-up force in the earth  
Now getting ready for a flow.  
A gusher's soon to have its birth.

See the rope and tools outward fly !  
On, through the spray of gas and Oil,  
Leaping upward towards the sky,  
I see the startled son of toil, —

Joining pipe ne'er fail ;  
In the tank Oil flows  
Spotting like a whale  
Every time it blows.

See the golden cream  
To the surface rise,  
Sparkling like a beam  
Coming from the skies.

Whatever pow'r used, whatever mode of toil,  
The people still produced a flood of Oil.  
Year by year they wrought hand and heart with  
toil,  
Their wealth was 'mine ; 'twas all for me their  
spoil.

As the moth in the candle's light e'er finds  
Certain doom, so, unto the " Oil-man " did  
The Exchange prove his financial tomb.



The Refiners gave what I demanded,  
Reluctant; they'd little money to spare.  
They'd say "Advance of freight takes the profits,  
And scarcely leaves a cent in our pockets."

I used to keep their nose to the grindstone,  
Filch from their purse, and squeeze from them  
groan,  
This, man might say was "cruel." Perhaps  
'twas,  
But it pleased me; 'twas the way I had to draw  
From them a fee.

The Producers made consolidated efforts  
To protect themselves against my power;  
Ev'ry attempt they made was damaging  
To their success and beneficial to mine.  
This one man power is great; one need not  
spend

His efforts in contending against his  
Own element, but can send his combined  
Strength into the enemy's camp, who  
At the best are divided in opinions.  
I could always discover their weakest points,  
And, like as a successful general  
Conquers his foe, I would break down all  
Opposing opposition, and throttle  
The Producers' movements by the hand  
Of Monopoly.

On this Sea of Oil I floated in my dream,  
I loved this sea for which I'd worked my  
    scheme.  
I had now no toil, no care to guard.

As in this blissful mood I lay,  
The green wave undulating as a thing  
Of life, —  
I felt not, nor cared not, for what had been ;

I felt ne'er a pang for committing sin.  
On I flew! My ship rode like a cork  
Through gold'n glimmering beams of moon-lit  
seas,

While the Oily wave with its gentle swell  
Would repel any storm that time could foretell.  
No power (save Heaven) that was afloat  
Could wreck my craft or harm my boat. Me-  
thought,

"I'm blest; the Great Power above protects  
me,

Although, alas, His punishment severe  
Has fall'n on mine enemies, who are writhing  
In torture beneath me."

Lo! now light as winged mist, so white the  
locks

And beard that swung to the breeze as wave's  
crest;

At his right side, jewelled set, a golden

Key he wore, while in his hand a crooked  
Staff he bore ; two wings, di'mond hinged, from  
his

Back protruding ; thus St. Peter from out  
The gates of Heaven to me forth came.

St. Peter gave his hand to me,  
And straight bore me on through the yielding  
air,

Up, up past the Archipel'gos of stars  
To the verdant rivage of the crystal  
Ocean.

The burst of a new being filled my soul,  
A pure unfoldment of a better life.  
Angels sang sweet songs as they floated amid  
Feathery clouds ; all Heaven's consort  
Commixed and commingled without discord.  
Obedient to her laws we drifted  
Through a melodious chorus with spherical  
Accuracy, subject to one great law ;

All law being subject to us ; with our souls  
Attuned unto all things, all things attuned  
To our souls, a dulcet finish was giv'n  
To Heaven's symphony.

Years appeared to pass like soft music  
In this melodious dream ; all timing  
With my ev'ry wish ; from day to day, each  
Gentler hour seemed enkindling within me  
A new life, increasing ever in joy.  
With greed I feasted upon each fleeting  
Moment, ever reluctant to let it pass ;  
Passing, always left my cup overcharged  
With new sweets. Now all sins of earth seemed  
    purged,  
And naught was left but the purest  
Gems of soul, whose precious liquid drops  
    caused  
But sweetest bliss that crowned my ev'ry  
    thought.

The birth of my new being  
Gave unto me such ravishing delight,  
I could but think Heav'n (though but on its  
verge)  
Held but little more happiness for me,  
So supreme was my bliss.

How majestic the hills crowned  
The winding meads, terrace o'er terrace, reach-  
ing  
Up until the blue expanse of Heaven  
Was as a bower of ravishing sweets.  
With such seraphic forms the place did teem  
It entranced all my sense in this fair dream.  
Angels roamed beneath Heaven's sunlit trees,  
And with joy sported o'er the fragrant leas.

No care, no thought of gold, or greed of gain.  
Possessed me, as I gazed o'er this heav'nly plain.  
All these charming scenes to me were as truth.

Here feeble age again renewed its youth :  
For here the Universe, the great Fountain  
Of all life !

As I, entranced, gazed around, St. Peter  
Unto me thus spoke :

“ Man, wonder not at this, nor yet do dote,  
For far in the realms of the God of Light,  
Far reaching, far beyond thy spirit's sight,  
Yes, so far beyond thy picturing mind  
As thy flooded earth from the farth'rest star ;  
So far that the star's light could never shine  
In myr'ads of years on that world of thine ;  
So far that but the purest souls could trace  
The soft ether depths of eternal space,  
There the sov'reign spirit of Life doth dwell,  
Self-made and self-formed by some mighty  
spell !

A rad'ant centre 'round which just souls move,  
Ay, a perfect haven of peace and love.

There the records of holy lives are scrolled ;  
There may the righteous enjoy bliss untold."

From my seat in Heaven, how glorious  
To peer through the infinite space all jewelled  
With sky-flowers,  
And note the harmony, the grandeur  
Of the Omnipotent !

" Casting visual nerve  
Askance," the orbs in space whose rays of light  
From billions of years down to a second  
It takes to reach the earth, drew my scenic  
To a focus. By looking from the stars  
In their several magnitudes, each in turn,  
All of which I could command from my seat  
In Heaven, and by so connecting them  
With spirit eye to convey sight as does  
Telephone sound to the ear, I could trace  
All events of earth, from the fall of man



Down to the coming of the second flood.  
In a twinkling I could compass the world's  
History ; note its foundation source, and mark  
The development of all 'vents thereon.

Time, to me was as nothing. A billion  
Of years was but as a thought. All the earth  
Was before me as a great book, wherein  
I could trace the minutest details  
Of man, bird, or beast.

As I from star to star noted the face  
Of creation, I saw on my world, seas  
Converted into deserts ; mountains and plains  
Sunk beneath the wave. I saw my native land,  
America, her hills pricking their heads  
High above the waters, when all that now " is  
Visible of Europe, save a few islands  
Dotted here and there, was submerged ; " " while  
America's coast line laid bare from

Nova Scotia to the far west," and the sun  
Pregnant with life, conceiving on the uprising  
Hills, grasses in copious green, fruits and flowers,  
Europe was beneath the sea, peopled by  
Finny tribes and perverse monsters of the deep.  
"Fish swam o'er the face of Europe that the like  
In man's history ne'er was seen," feasting  
On the same grounds where kings and princesses  
In all their regal sway have since banqueted.  
The crocodiles, alligators, and snakes  
Ugly coiled, first found shores in America  
To bask in the sun. Here birds first chirped  
their  
Sweet notes from bending boughs. Before Eu-  
rope  
Saw the light of day America beat  
And palpitated with life.

After this age of the world,  
All blessed by God, I saw a change in earth's

Formation ; Asia, Africa, and Europe  
Rose above the water's surface and were  
Coupled with America by a neck of land,  
Now forming the ocean bed. Then opened  
Up to me the garden of Eden in all its  
Unfoldments ; the creation of Adam and Eve !  
It was a beauteous sight to see,  
The birth of love in its primitive  
Simplicity, wise counsel, strength, and tender  
Care blended.

In converse close, beheld I  
Adam and his lovely Eve ; list'ning intent,  
Methought I heard Adam address Eve thus,  
“ Sweet companion of my joys, the way of  
peace  
And happiness is ours ; the path wherein  
We tread determines the future state of man.  
We have boundless scope, our will and way is  
Unmolested and unforbidden, save

The fruitage of a choice tree herein planted  
In our garden Eden to leave untouched ;  
This fruitage, though sweet and knowledge giving,

If partaken of brings death and the curse of sin  
Upon us and our seed. With jealous care  
Thou flesh of mine I'll guide your steps far from  
This tree ; together let us walk abroad  
The works of creation to view. We being  
The most perfect and God-like, His harvests  
Are all for our comfort, yet judiciously  
We must use them."

I traced this happy twain  
Wandering far mid the rocks, trees, flowers,  
And fruits of creation ravished by God's  
Unfoldments of life and beauty, until  
Adam, being weary from assisting  
Eve through the virgin growth of tangled  
Vegetable life, lay him down to rest ;

He, the while, giving a warning voice to Eve,  
Saying, "Keep close within this bower,  
At farthest go not beyond my voice's sound  
For fear some evil one may be hereabout  
Lurking, and with seductive art lure thee  
On to sin."

"Fear not, dear Adam," said Eve. "The wisdom

Of your words has deep rooted in my heart,  
And no lurking evil can entice me  
From thy love and my fixed purpose to be  
True unto thee." Time wafted on; during  
The hours of Adam's God-like sleep, Eve  
strayed

And fell; and that canker sin in the heart  
Of man has been working ever since.

I traced the steps of primitive man;  
Like as our pilgrim fathers fled their

Native heath under the scourge of religious  
Persecution, so these children of the East  
Fled deep into the wilds of then unknown  
America, and worshipped their God then,  
As we now, according to the dictates  
Of conscience. They built their cabin sides of  
mud,  
And made dry their roofs by layers of bark ;  
Their bunks, soft strewn with hemlock twigs,  
made  
Downy beds for the persecuted pilgrims.  
They loved this land, new to them, this land of  
bloom  
And plenty. Rich the chase in deer and bear,  
Sea and forest birds. Seas swarmed with fish  
and furs ;  
God's bounty was everywhere. It seemed  
As if the hand of Providence guided them,  
For as they were in the distance pursued  
Across this neck of land by their foe,

The ocean changed the course of her mighty  
Deep, shutting off communication by land,  
Between America, with Europe, Asia,  
And Africa, protecting these persecuted  
Souls from farther pursuit. The land that bore  
Verdure green in trees and vines, found a  
wat'ry

Grave. Bowers of shading foliage  
On whose boughs birds took shelter, hatched  
their young,  
Lay as grounds for shoals of fish to spawn and  
feast.

In nooks where grew fruitage choice, were  
pearly shells

About all strewn; seaweed wove in webs 'bout  
The trailing vines, while coral insects built  
About the trees. Shut off by seas, the battles  
Of the East could not harrass further these  
Persecuted children. The great waters  
Had opened their flood-gates, closing from them

Farther pursuit ; they were free, and need bend  
To no will save the Great Spirit's.

From other stars I saw the " waves  
Of the Atlantic Ocean for ages  
Beating against the shores of Africa  
And Spain," that were ever wasting, wasting,  
until

" The Straits of Gibraltar opened before them."

I saw Niagara Falls open its  
Flood-gates near where Lewiston now stands,  
And gradually recede year by year,  
Eating its way back through thousands of years  
Until it occupied its present site.

By looking from a star  
(To reach the earth it took its light nineteen  
Hundred years), — I could see that speck of  
earth

In all its unfoldments, as it swung



In eternal space nineteen cent'ries 'go !  
I there marked the fall of Jerusalem.  
From other stars saw Christ striding the flood,  
While his disciples were standing abashed  
At the suspension of Nature's great laws,  
And the accomplishment of this miracle.  
I noted all wars as in a picture,  
From savage barb'rians to the conflict  
Of the Rebellion.

I saw the curse and glory in all ages  
Of the world ! Vast and powerful empires,  
Great monarchs and their resplendent courts ;  
I saw clearly into all the secret  
Workings of those huge pow'rs ; how to nourish  
Their strength, and how best their opposing  
Opposition to withstand.

I noted  
The artistic Greeks ; their quick insight

Into all things that to noble actions led ;  
The downfall, by savage hosts of Ætolians,  
Of their oldest sanctuary of plastic art,  
Dodona ; and, too, the fertile Samos,  
Where rose the ancient temple of Juno,  
Whose seed nourished the God-heads of Grecian  
Art, devastated, laid waste by usurping  
Pow'rs. I dwelt so long and so earnestly  
On the sacred groves of Apollo, 'mid  
Whose shades the Grecian gods were wrought,  
that I  
Was entranced, so wondrous was this age  
Of art.

Then, changing events drew my attention  
To the panorama of my life that remained  
Indellibly fixed on the spacious  
Heavens, travelling from one sphere to another  
On the wings of light, yet ever present  
Like a shadow in the sun. My acts of

Inhumanity seemed most prominent  
And would repeatedly cross my range of vision,  
However adjusted. To have these skeletons  
Of fate always before me, plagued me somewhat,

But suddenly I was attracted by  
A beautiful system of changing shades,  
Which so engrossed my attention for a time,  
I forgot these visions of sin, and marked  
The beautiful emerald tints, like blades  
Of grass, with orange blending, radiating  
Into the most exquisite shades of gold.  
The far distant suns shed reflections from  
Their mirrors, on opaque bodies that hung  
Poised in space, transposing them into gardens  
Of Eden, that I longed to possess.

I drew a focus from a ray of light  
That brought my scenic to the vale of Oil Creek.  
It was summer, and the primitive growth

Of nature lay palpitating with life  
And beauty o'er vale and hill. Where the  
broad

River wound its silent way, by stars at night,  
The sun by day, to the mouth or source,  
The Indians canoeing, tracked their way.

I saw the Indians at their sports ; some  
Anointing themselves with Seneca Oil,  
Others lounging carelessly in the shade.  
As quietly I sat watching these children  
In their accustomed habits, and listening  
To the dreamy murmur of a fountain  
In the vale, breathing its soft notes of slumber,  
I was startled to see the Indians  
In hot pursuit of a fleeing stag.  
My heart with ardor beat as he skirted  
The green hills, far swifter than the eagle's  
flight.

On they sped, the hell-hounds were after him !

Close on his trail the arrows were flying.

“Speed! speed for your life! You must speed,  
for death

By the redskins is close at your side!” On,

On now he flew; past fleet-running foxes,

Past wildcats and hares, past mountains and  
gorges;

Past swift-running streams whose waters he’d  
quaffed;

Now sighting the hills near the broad flowing

River; missing the arrows that came

From the quiver, he onward did speed.

His sinews were strained to the sight of his eye.

The waters that lay at the foot of the mountain,

To reach was his hope for his life.

Fleet he is speeding with flag in the air,

Ev’ry nerve strained to its utmost tension.

Close and closer he’s nearing his hoped-for  
goal!

Yet close and closer the hounds are on him.

See! he is trembling, he staggers, he reels!  
Almost a life his efforts have cost.  
Now on the verge of safety, can it be  
That it's lost? Look! the hounds are tearing  
Him down! The red blood of life gushes  
Forth from his wounds. One more effort he  
makes,

Goring the dogs as they rush for his life,  
Crimson with their blood his antlers are dyed,  
Coloring the waters as he plunges  
'Neath the dark-flowing tide. "Hurrah! Hur-  
rah!"

I cried, as he swam bravely o'er and 'scaped  
'Neath the thicket on the far-distant shore.

As I gazed around 'mid the sloping hills,  
On pine-fringed streams with nodding crests  
dipping  
Low and gracefully to the resinous air,  
Where clustering vines and fragrant laurels

Were blooming fresh in nature's wilds ; where  
wild rose

And gay honeysuckle were twining close,  
And intermingling their sweets on passing  
breeze ;

In religious worship saw I the children  
Of the forest. After the chief had rehearsed  
In love and war their conquests of the past,  
Till the sun westward drove across the sloping  
Hills to its rest, until night with her sable  
Wings kissed up the day in soft sleep, unveiling  
Her stars, and chasing her glor'ous canopy  
Of light behind the deep'ning shades of gloom,  
Sat the devout children of the forest  
Amid their worship. As they passed the calu-  
met

Of peace among their braves, Seneca Oil,  
As if by magic, arose to the surface  
Of the stream. The moon sank behind the hill ;  
Darkness lay like a pall over the face

Of earth. As the torch-bearer with steady  
Hand, unfaltering step, moved forward and  
dipped

His light amid the oleaginous fluid,  
The great fire in a golden, lambent glow  
Of flame shot above their bending forms,  
While they chanted forth in unison : —

“ Oh, Great Spirit !

Mighty art Thou ! Thy power doth far surpass  
The wild waste with all its rocks and streams,  
With all its hills and vales. We love Thee,  
As we love the shade of the wood at noonday  
heat.

We love Thee as the dew the flowers ;  
As the earth the sun ; as the hunter the chase.  
Guide us to hunting-grounds where birds and  
beasts  
Are feasting in the shades ; where streams are  
filled



With otter, mink, fish and fowl. Make us  
keen

Of sight, quick of ear,

So detecting all trails that lead to danger.

Like as autumnal leaves are swept by whirlwinds  
Sweep away the pale-faces from our shores.

Drive them across the great waters that they  
May not come in the dark night, with soundless  
Steps like snowflakes' fall, and murder our sleep.

Drive them from us that we may not in fear

Rest on our tomahawk and bow. Drive them

From us that a cloud may lift from the face

Of our race ; that the sighing of our hearts

Will be no more ; that the wrath in our eyes

May soft'n ; that our voices, like hollow winds,

May not be mournful. Drive them from us

That our squaws' hearts may not be sad ; that  
they

May not raise the wail of grief for our braves

Slain in battle. Like a cloud before the wind

They have driven us towards the setting  
Sun, seeking our lives like Kichemanatou,  
The god of evil; slain our braves whose spirits  
Now are shaking the shaggy locks of the wood,  
And whispering to us on the passing breeze  
Of 'Revenge!' No more shall we hear their  
whoop

In the chase; no more their bows twang in our  
Defence; no more the scalp of the foe  
Shall hang from their belts. The pale-faces have  
sent

Them to their long home. The Evil spirit  
Is in the pale-faces! Drive them from us,  
That we may build our wigwams, raise our  
corn,

Hunt and live many moons from now in peace.  
At last guide us safe through the dark river  
Of death to the forests of our lost braves."

As those savage children looked upon

The towering wall of fire, they worshipped  
It as a deity. Again and again  
Their shouts of praise went forth to the Great  
Spirit.

Again and again the echo from the hills  
Fell back upon the ear, till morn broke forth,  
Kissing up the dew from off their brows,  
And closing this simple but devout worship  
Of their Deity.

I marked the development of Petroleum,  
Tracing it from the heathen fire-worshippers  
To the blanket gathering Oil merchant  
Selling it as a sov'reign cure for aches and  
pains ;

On through decades of years, till the clumsy  
Haymaker was set in diamonds  
From its still further development  
And commercial value.

I saw thousands of people, like a hurricane,

Sweep the land, rush on to the Oil region,  
Secure leases, drill wells, until Oil Creek vale  
Was a very fount of Oil, flowing  
To waste unceasingly. Short of barrels,  
Short of tanks, no pipe-lines then, as since,  
To checker the land like a spider's netting,  
And convey the crude Oil safe to market;  
But four thousand teams, and hundreds of flat-  
boats  
In daily rounds could not transport the crude  
Oil  
To railroads distant, fast enough to relieve  
The glutted tanks that sat buried in the wealth  
Of their overflowing contents.

As I gazed on this scene, Nature seemed hurt,  
And in her sobbing pulsations sent forth  
A stream of Oily tears that came welling  
Up from her lacerated heart, as if weeping  
For the wrong-doing of man.

The confined gas  
From the way-down bowelly depths of earth,  
In its spontan'ous rising to earth's surface  
Flayed the rich green Oil into yellow foam,  
That floated like flakes of gold on the em'rald  
Oily surface of the tanks, then like heat went  
    escaping  
From the pipe in rings, floating far and wide  
In the generous air.

I saw hundreds of towns in the Oil region  
Rise like magic, and vanish like mist  
Before a summer's day.  
I could trace in different periods  
Of my life, the husbandman tilling  
His beautiful green and golden-ripe  
Harvest lands. I could note the mellow dawn  
Shed its soft lustre o'er Pennsylvania's hills,  
And the autumnal tints in a thousand  
Colors, beautiful, changing.

Methought I could hear

The silvery tones of trickling stream  
As it wound its way through Oil Creek vale,  
Past yielding wells, on, on past Oil farms rich,  
To the river Alleghany it took  
Its course. I could see flowing wells throwing  
Their golden spray into the derricks high  
That glisten'd in the sun's beams like rainbow  
hues,  
Diamond-sprinkled, or like Heav'n's jewels  
Goodly set in varied shades sparkling in the  
sky.

I took note of the pompous, wise Professor,  
Who in the sorcery of his wits,  
Where the hills meet the vales, went groping  
'long  
The ground with a forked witch-hazel twig,  
Locating an Oil well for some innocent,  
Unsuspecting, gullible fellow.

Too, the Oil-smeller, with his nose to the earth  
Went snuffing the secrets from the womb of  
Nature —

The spiritualistic mediums  
Gathered information from departed souls  
And located Oil-wells according  
To their direction, which, notwithstanding,  
From a higher pow'r were not always, produc-  
tive.

From the punctured soil gushed a min'ral Oil  
That lit the spots of earth yet unhallowed  
By the sun. Along our streets, and at our  
Hearth-stones Nature's gas shed a welcome ray.

Her golden glow of wealth in my full purse  
Like di'monds shone. Far out upon the sea  
The Oily fluid glowed, a ruby beacon  
To the mariner. Like a divine thought  
It has shed its glamour o'er all the world.

I noted all the changes, different,  
In the "Oil Fever," from the first coming  
In of the Drake-well to my crowning effort  
In Oil producing. I watched with pleasure  
My dazzling triumph, "The S. I. Co.,"  
Bud and blossom into the "S. O. Co.,"  
Which rolled on in its greedy flood until  
It swept the world, developing a maw  
Insatiable.

I saw the world in its development  
From beginning through ages of mis'ry  
And lustre. I saw the earth when its cascades,  
Cataracts, nodding woodlands, hills and vales  
Were by water submerged, again and again.  
Then I walked with the husbandman while turn-  
ing  
The sod, and tasted sweet the breathing odors  
Of newly opened furrows. I marked  
America's patriarchs cluster like stars



To beat back English despots, that with hand  
Mighty were trying to hold them under  
The monarchial yoke. I saw Liberty  
Take shape amid the primitive forests  
Of America ; woodmen felling the trees,  
The log cabin spring up ; fields of waving grain  
Shoot forth ; heard the song of the reaper,  
The tingling of the herd-bell, until all  
Nature teemed with life and liberty  
Amid this grand Republic.

But in the midst of my meditations,  
St. Peter interposed and bade me follow.  
Down, down we flew, our wings dipping sweetly  
The rainbow hue of the star-spangled Heavens ;  
On we flew, through gleaming fields of asteroids,  
Disturbing not the spirit of night,  
Nor yet the drowsy ferry-man on his  
Nocturnal rounds, whose great business

I'd destroyed, but who yet goes mournfully,  
Silently on his way. Still on we flew.

After travelling several  
Billions of miles, we directed our course  
By a flick'ring ray of light shooting forth  
From a bright star of the twelfth magnitude,  
Whose waning glow from starting-point to earth  
Is four thousand years *en route*, trav'ling two  
hundred  
And thirty thousand miles in a second,  
A distance of twenty-three thousand billions  
Of miles.

Down, down we winged, on past Neptune,  
On past Uranus floating sol'tary  
In the gloomy distance of giddy space,  
On, on past myriads of solar systems,  
From whose shades of gold and green, blue and  
red,

Shone forth in a unison of soft colors of  
The most ravishing shades of beauty to greet us.  
Oh ! with what an unimaginable charm,  
Clothed in gorgeous splendor, hung the glitt-  
    'ring  
Lights in space. We passed ruby moons, glim-  
    'ring  
Stars of emerald hue ; large opal suns,  
All shining with iridescent glory !  
This heavenly jewelry soft'ning into  
Varied shades, beautiful, illumined my track  
Through space.

We swiftly rushed past mighty orbs,  
Whose "marble beams" in lustre, heat, and  
    light,  
Out-vied the sun. Then, slowly on with slack'n'd  
Speed and resting mien we moved through hazy  
    blue  
Of dreamy ether in an ecstasy

Of delight. Again on, my soul's propelling  
pow'r

Forced me, winged with flight to outstrip the  
fleetest

Ray of light. Down, down we flew, deviating  
Our course to shun Saturn in the seventh  
Heavens, under whose malevolent rays  
The Producers and Independent Refiners were  
born,

Filling them full of foulest contagions,  
Paralysis, gout, abscesses, obstructions  
Of the heart and liver ; breeding discord  
And contention in their souls. As for a base  
Purpose, some power from the bowelled deep  
Hath fixed thee in the Heav'ns, thou detested  
Plague spot.

On, on, swiftly on we flew, past  
The polluting air of that most loathsome  
Planet, Saturn, till we neared the smiling,

Refulgent rays of Jupiter, shining  
Forth to meet us. We held our course direct  
Across her bright, broad expanse of surface,  
Anon dipping low to rest on mountain  
Peak our flight.

Methought I then gazed around  
In a bewilderment of pure delight ;  
For all things were beautifully strange to me.  
The fruit, the flowers, the grain, and the soil,  
All animated and vegetable life  
Were of a most ravishing symmetry.

The ant'lopes nimbly bounded from jewelled  
Rock to rock, plucking sweet herbage, to me  
Of unknown growth, which fed their lives and  
love  
Alike. They so fondly caressed each other,  
I bethought me, if the children of earth  
Could have seen that spirit of devoted love.

In the brute creation of Jupiter,  
They would have slunk for shame, it so far  
surpassed

All human love that e'er was seen on earth.  
Ev'ry branch, ev'ry quiver in each leaf  
Was sacred to love ; through ev'ry bower  
And palace in the land was heard the voice  
Of love. From the songs of Nature that came  
In snatches on the fragrant breeze, was love !  
There was nothing in Nature that was void,  
For through all things sweet love seemed mur-  
muring.

I saw great trees with massive roots clinging  
To crevice side and around diamond rock,  
Whose glaring space was cover'd part with lucid  
Green, and golden shades of moss, while other  
part

In gorgeous color was exposed to view.  
From each pore the trees sent forth such frag-  
rance,

It gave to the air a soft,  
Dreamy delight.

As we wandered o'er this broad jewelled ex-  
panse,  
With transports we gazed in the valley below,  
On Jupiter's most ravishing beauties.  
We noted the vessels on the broad green,  
Glimm'ring sea, going to and from their marts,  
Swept ever on by the mighty wind, swift  
As in the blue void winged — no ships of  
earth,  
Puritan or Mayflower, so fleet as they.

Low in the vale anon our way we took,  
Passing stupendous vine-clad palaces ;  
Over sweet murmuring rills and winding meads ;  
On, past blooming banks of velvet flowers ;  
Winding on, through, and past vast sylvan  
shades,

To the haunts of wood-nymphs we held our  
way.

At our approach the nymphs lippled sweet their  
songs,

Filling our souls with all the harmony  
Of Heaven's melodies.

How soft the perfumed breezes blew !

As to the wood we gently drew :

Voices murmuring in the bow'rs,

Nymphs were gath'ring bright-hued flowers,

Some were reclining on the ground,

Others dancing to music's sound.

Ev'ry turn they new graces showed,

As from the lute soft music flowed.

Flushed by the giddy, whirling maze,

On ruby cheeks 'twas sweet to gaze ;

While down their necks that 'lectric glowed,

Begemmed, their silken tresses flowed.



Scarfs of gems of the brightest hue  
Swung, as they whirled the ether blue.

From their ears hung pearls that softly glowed,  
While from their necks fair rubies showed.  
On their fingers the rarest stone  
In countless rays like meteors shone.  
Here love poured forth its sweetest show'r  
To living grace in ev'ry bow'r.  
All Nature nestled as a dove,  
All perfect planned by hand of Love.  
We lingered long until the dusky eve  
Broke in, then decked in flowers appeared their  
Queen, the most exquisite beauty e'er was seen.  
In a sweet dignity of royal birth  
The divine working of her charms shone forth.  
For her people she was pregnant with love ;  
Their faith in her was deep as mighty space  
'bove.  
In ev'ry movement a noble self-repose,

A Queen of queens her ev'ry grace but shows ;  
Such par'mount grandeur on earth ne'er was  
seen ;

There ne'er was compeer to this woodland  
queen.

As along over Jupiter's bosom  
Of unparalleled soil, the dappled sun  
Serene arose, kissing sweetly the melting  
Dew from refreshed Nature, I stood amazed,  
In transports at Jupiter's unfoldments.  
Broad fields of rip'ning grain lay before me ;  
Herds of cattle ; great cities cut and reared  
From diamond quarries loomed up so bright,  
The changing hues dazzled my spirit sight.

As we onward took our course, people trooped  
After us, decked in garlands of rarest  
Flowers (some to me very like the tube-rose  
And orange blossom), went strewing them 'long

Our path. 'Mong those children of innocence

God reigned in the heart supreme. Transgression,

None there ; no sin, all a un'ty of love  
And saint-like pur'ty. All things so beautiful  
To the spirit-eye so perfect all work,  
One might have mistaken it for the abode  
Of angels !

The animals found so easy  
Their support, in pleasure and harmony  
Dwelt as one family. The spotted leopard,  
Lion and mottled fawn (as I would call them),  
Mingled and sported in the same forest.  
Plumy birds of passage, fearless of man,  
Winged their swift course unmolested, over  
Running streams, and through fields of rip'ning  
grain,  
From zone to zone.

Birds of song ever warbled their sweet lays  
In the never-changing spring ; singing praise  
To new glories that awaited upon  
The dawning of each morn, or sang to sleep  
The dewy eve to its ambrosial shades.  
There the verdant banks of flowers ever  
Bloomed unasked ; new buds putting forth, ere  
old  
Beauties died away.

With unalloyed pleasure,  
I watched the twilight deepen into sable  
Gloom, over forest and o'er mountain-tips  
'Till sleep, that " balm of life," rested on Jupiter's  
Fair domains. Amid this quiet profound  
The teeming soil sent forth a mellow warmth  
Of budding beauty, so closely linking  
Animate and inanimate nature  
That Jupiter seemed the one sacred spot

Blest by God. The spontaneous growth of life's  
Nourishment gave food and drink like a nurse ;  
Flesh and blood were fed and watered from her  
Prolific harvests without an effort.

There were such existing relations between  
Jupiter and her children, one could pluck  
A jewel from the sod and in its crystal  
Depths, see reflected the pur'ty of her life.

Jupiter seemed to say to her nurslings,  
" I know you all, you are my children, flesh  
And bone of my getting ! You are of me,  
A part and parcel of my great whole.  
I love you all, yet I'm proud of my hills,  
Forests, slopes and vales ; they all obey my  
laws,

Pulsate and throb to the beating of my  
Desires. The mallow-grass that's filled  
With little insects, the flowers, sipped by  
Murmuring bees, are of me. My nature

Thrills with the dawning of new life. I enthuse  
All with love, as if the rock, tree, turf  
And animate nature was the common  
Father, mother of all life embodied  
In one creature."

The people of Jupiter in religious  
Liberties, domestic relations,  
The magical splendor of their art,  
Internal and external developments  
Are crowned with such a halo of glory  
As no other world can hope to achieve.

We winged on, over  
The blooming sod of Jupiter, whose fragrance  
Led sweet our trail. ('Tis said, Jupiter's soft  
beams  
Shed lustre o'er the birth of all  
Great men), and whose refulgent rays gave  
forth

Unus'al brightness when I first drew breath  
Of mortal life.

It was said, there were great  
Freaks in Nature, before unknown to man  
At my birth. New suns appeared in the  
Heav'ns  
To illumé this greatest of all occasions !

New stars of the first magnitude shone forth  
In the blue depths serene of boundless space ;  
While all of the planets in the radius  
Of billions of miles, shone unparalleled  
Forth, on this, the most peerless occasion.  
But the earth, ne'er before was in such rage.  
Nature, in her ever mysterious  
Workings, held strange freaks. Black clouds,  
demon-like  
Frowned o'er the face of Heaven, while the  
earth,

Like a stagg'ring drunkard, reeled to and fro,  
Shaking its poles to the very centre.

Through all the wildness of her nature  
Earth opened up the channels of her flood  
And vom'ted forth from her unsated womb  
Huge slimy monsters of the deep. She shook  
Her avalanches, whose projecting peaks  
Hung like a lowering pestilence  
Over doomed cities ; sending grim terror  
To heart of man.

It was predicted at my birth,  
Of me, after a certain number of years  
I " should fill the world with dread and woe !  
Bring all living creatures down to my feet ;  
Cause mis'ry and suff'ring to man before  
Unknown ; making earth quake, shiv'ring man's  
soul with fear.  
While at my passing out earth would explode,



And shoot forth into space, a worthless wreck!"  
Thus far all's proved true 'twas prophesied  
Of me, and why not all the rest?

On we flew, past Mars in its blood glimm'ring  
light,  
Shedding forth its horrors hast'ning our flight  
To the sun's burning rays; there we lent  
Extra speed to our pinions, and swifter  
Than thought we flew through burning rays.  
Then we  
Onward winged till we reached our sister  
worlds, Venus  
And Murcury.

Still on we winged, till we scaled the giddy  
Heights aloft and seated ourselves on the horn  
Of the crescent moon, there to bethink us  
And take a prospectus of my gloomy world  
below.

With St. Peter when first setting out,  
I, as if perforce he took me, reluctantly  
Followed. At the prodigious aerial flight  
I was somewhat affrighted. Towards the disk  
Of the silver moon soaring up, o'er white  
Pillowed clouds, on through the blue sky front-  
ing  
The stars, leaving behind earth's shades, we  
winged.

In the distance vast lay my torments, for  
To fall was death ! if lost, become a wanderer  
In space.

Still we onward wafted,  
I the while keeping sight of my sun that  
Seemed to shine with unusual lustre  
Until to a star dim and faint, waning,  
Sunk into the distance, hiding from me  
Its identity in the midst of the  
Milky way. It seemed as if a cloud,

Creamy white, had veiled her surface, yet 'mid  
Its translucent folds shone soft opalescent  
Hues, fixing my ken as if tranced by its  
Beauteous maze. So far from home being,  
I at first mourned the awful calamity,  
And inward perplexed lay with thoughts of evil  
Nature framed, being fearful I could not  
Return to my possessions. I was about  
To lose heart, when straight from the mental  
strain

I was relieved by being endowed with  
Angelic range of vision that brought to light  
My world and its attending spheres as if close  
At hand.

Again being myself, with pleasure I viewed  
The charming scenes that were dotted over  
This vast field of space. The changing systems  
Of gold'n gales from pellucid depths of color  
Reminded me of one grand flower garden.

All the hues and shades of plants and flowers  
Were pictured in this array of Heav'n's jewels.  
The binary suns, white and purple,  
Yellow and blue, gold and red, changing  
Periodically, variable, from  
A maximum to a minimum of  
Intensity, ravished my senses  
With their most wonderful beauty.

As I looked o'er  
Our nebula (I might say mine) of thirty  
Millions of worlds I bethought me, "What an  
Improvement I shall make in the condition  
Of affairs in this unorganized  
System of worlds when I assume control!  
'Twill become apparent how I shall develop  
Matters farther on. Here is the hand that  
Will hold the sceptre of power and at  
Pleasure wield it. 'Tis but a mission  
Providence has assigned me ; for what it's  
Worth I'll use it. I'll eat into the commerce

Of creation, as into the vitals  
Of man, consumption. As death fattens on  
life

I'll grow rank on life's substance. The infinite  
Riches that lie before me I can but  
Admire, in wonder silent.

I'll discover in boundless space, new spheres  
With Oil laden, with immeasurable  
Stratas of lead, zinc, copper, hills of  
Solid iron, rushing streams whose sands are  
Intermingled with gold and precious stones.  
Ocean like deserts of exhaustless fertil'ty,  
These multiform products will all enhance  
My stores of wealth. I will still on, opening up  
A multiplicity of worlds in distance  
So vast the flight of soul scarce can reach, so  
vast

Fancy cannot picture, nor figures compute  
This immensity of space, nor my  
Accruing wealth.

“ With deep int’rest and vision telescopic  
I view these nebula fields before me ;  
The arbitrary shades disappear and void  
Opens its world of wonders, wherein  
The mighty machinery of the Heav’ns  
Is only excelled by the vast viewless  
Void. All this wonder amid my little world  
Loses prestige and sinks in insignificance.  
I will for the present (continued I, still  
Self communing), establish a centre  
In each nebula making my head-quarters  
In my beloved star Jupiter ; this, of all  
My different organized systems to be  
The centre. But soft ! a difficulty  
Stupenduous will soon arise, from Jupiter’s  
Not having a capacity to contain  
The wealth accumulating by my projected  
Scheme ; this will necessitate my building  
A world with dimensions prodigious. I will  
Take spheres, a multiplicity, and resolve

Them into one great orb, scooped and hollowed  
Like an urn, to increase its capacity ;  
With vaults and cells for holding lucre ;  
All fire-proof, roofed with gold and set with  
precious

Stones. Yes! I will make such a world. I  
will

Plant this world in the centre of operations  
Making it the recipient and observatory  
Of my entire domain.

I will be in communication

With each and ev'ry world in all the diff'rent  
Nebulæ so as to note the earnings  
Of each individual sphere, and mark  
The reports to, and returns from the centre  
Of operations of each nebula.

There is nothing in this arrangement but  
What is practical, and I shall put it  
Into operation at once. My expenses  
Will be slight, as I shall arrange for spirits

To do the work, who, like chameleons,  
Shall feed upon air. “ Let me see, how shall  
I manage this?” mused I ; “ the spirits now  
In Heaven, I may not control, but all  
Of those in Hell I think I can manage,  
And there is by far the largest percentage  
Below. This is what I will do, I’ll bail  
Them out ! It can be done if I have to bribe  
The devil, and have their services  
For his consideration. I’ll make him  
My foreman, to keep them in fear ; if they  
Become incorrigible he can subdue  
Them. There are some fearfully bad characters  
From the Oil regions that are now languishing  
In Hell, which, to keep in subjection,  
Will need the combined forces, and constant  
Vigilance of the Penal Powers, yet I  
Must needs have them, for most of them have  
had  
A large experience in the Oil business,



And can take right hold and do the drilling for,  
And refining of Oil. I am going  
To test the territory for Oil  
On all of my possessions ; if anticipated  
Results follow I'll make the Oil business  
A prominent feature of my new domains.  
Yet there are some difficulties in the way ;  
Those very souls that I needs must have  
My work to execute I would fain leave  
In the Pool. Ah, well ! I'll through the week  
work  
Them, then deep in Hell drive them forth to  
languish,  
And abide their time Sundays. Holidays  
I'll sink them lower in the depths of woe to  
chafe  
And smite the air into eddyding dusky  
Whirlwinds, that, moaning will mock their cries  
And lamentations sore, until, grief-tried,  
And horror-stricken, they will plead for mercy ;

Thus subdued from Hell come forth, penitent  
And obedient to work my will.

“ When bringing souls from the depths of grief  
And torments, with vicious designs, somewhat  
Subdued, I'll have them to understand  
By my suggestion and desire they were  
Released. This will make them revere me  
As a god, and thus I shall command more  
Work from them. Yet some few despoiled  
wretches

From the Oil regions, the Producers and Inde-  
pendent

Refiners, who somewhat tried my patience  
When they were on earth, by interfering  
With my schemes, and bowed reluctantly  
To my will, I'd still make acknowledge  
My superiority and again feel  
My pow'r. I'll have them feed upon Hell's  
diet,

Brimstone, for all time, thus driving the corruption

From their blood in carbuncle-sores. I'll have  
Adders about them coiled with their 'venom'd  
stuck,'

In torture dire lancing their fest'rings, putrid.

While the pestilent sores are from their blood

Forth-coming and they in grief lamenting,

In mocking exposure I'll have them before

My very eyes exhibited; then chuckling

I'll feed upon their misery until

They pleading beg for relief, which for certain

Considerations in obedience

I'll grant them. This will be a humiliation

Sore to their haughty souls and a triumph  
grand

For me. I fear those souls that while on earth

Murder committed, will of no service

Be to me; deep in the lower stratas

Of Hell they will be so scourged with torture,

That sore lamenting their time they can but  
spend.

'Tis well, I'd shrink from this 'godless crew.'

Some few souls there are, when they were on  
earth

I had some slight regard for, now languishing

In the Pool, abjured their heav'nly bliss

By monopolizing certain commodities

To the detriment and discomfort

Of others ; to them, be it said, I acted

With some consideration ; I'll give them

My lightest employment, have them clean  
'Stills.'

" Feasible are all my plans, and when

I get matters systematized as I did

The S. O. Company on earth, I will

Then connect the different nebulae

And planetary systems to my central

Focus, with a ray of light both for sight

And sound, no matter how far distant.  
With this telephone of sight and sound, I can  
Note the every day occurrences  
Of transpiring events. Had I been  
Possessed with ambition, I might  
Have developed this thought, and had my scheme  
In operation previous to this.  
I have no fear but that I can crush all  
Opposition that may present itself,  
And thus amass the wealth of the entire  
Creation. I will not drown more worlds, but  
In a commercial way, absorb the wealth  
Of each planet, until the people groaning  
Under the weight of poverty and oppression,  
Dying, will let slip their souls. While escaping,  
I will enlist these airy immortals  
Into my service to work as I may  
Dictate, feed them upon air-diet,  
And occasionally give them a little  
Recreation in Hell.

“ I will place a series of worlds  
In convenient groups to use as plants  
For vast Oil distilleries, and all the globes  
Containing Oil, at a close proximity,  
So, with a slight outlay of material  
I can pipe the Oil to my refining  
Int'rest. Having all under one supervision  
I can manufacture with much less expense.  
I will place my exporting and shipping  
Facilities under one organized head,  
Having millions of worlds in use for wharfage,  
And export shipping traffic.  
This will bring my several interests  
Together, under one management. Having  
Complete control of the Oil business, I'll charge  
The people as much per gallon as my fancy  
Dictates, which will be no trivial sum.  
I will introduce a new system  
Of currency (having my own profile  
On the face of each coin), to be used

Universally throughout all creation.  
I'll establish mints and do all the coining  
Myself; this to be done under an organized  
System of worlds similar to my Oil int'rests.  
For this work I shall need to secure spirits  
Known for honesty and integrity,  
Which will be difficult, they'd be so liable  
To spirit away the precious metals.  
For this work I must needs secure some  
Of the old Puritan stock if I have  
To search Heaven for such help. I will  
Also allow but one language spoken,  
The English, in order to do away  
With interpreters and a complication  
Of difficulties that would arise  
From a mixture of tongue.

“ Worlds that are prolific  
With tin and other valuable metals,  
I will place at a convenient distance

From my refining interests, having  
The tin metal for the manufacture  
Of cans to be used in exporting Oil  
From sphere to sphere ; this will be done by  
great

Air vessels flying through space fleet as thought,  
Manned by skilled spirits. I will allow  
No electric lights, or electricity  
Used, save in death, and that I will adopt  
As a mode of execution. I'll permit  
No gas used, or light save Oil, and that all  
Must come through me. If the Oil gives out,  
I might put in the Edison light, but  
I'll give no royalty on the invention.

The desire for gold hath so goaded me on,  
That I as yet have made but a start  
And my projected scheme doth only approxi-  
mate

An approach to my desire. I would  
Make a proviso touching upon my



Refining plants. If I can the heat of Hell  
Control (no doubt but I can), my distilling  
Of Oil will therein be done ; this will o'ercome  
A series of difficulties that needs  
Must otherwise be perplexing ; bribing  
The Devil and taking souls out of their  
Natural sphere ; while not least but last,  
The enormous saving of fuel,  
Which alone would bring to my purse countless  
Millions. This is a generous thought,  
And further into the heat of Hell I'll look.  
Such results can I bring 'bout as controlling  
The ne'er consuming Penal fires, I'll astonish  
Creation ! Piping to save in conveyance  
Of crude Oil from sphere to sphere ; the worlds  
Teeming with Oil I will wheel convenient  
To the Pool, tap them, suck the Oil from their  
Bowels, tow them back to do their natural  
Work. I must soon manage to give the Devil  
An audience with me to see what

Arrangement satisfactory I can  
Make for his heat.

“’Tis true, while floating near the gates of  
flame

The people these worlds occupying  
Will need salamanders to be, to withstand  
The overpressure of heat. But what odds  
To me if they should wither under the blight  
Of Hell? ’Twill, figuratively speaking,  
Only be a day sooner for them ; all  
Things considered, it may be for the best,  
Save many from a degradation deeper  
Who would have committed murder, then  
sunk

Lower down within the pool ; by this mode  
The average will be better, thus the plane  
Of punishment higher and less. Like as  
To a nest of worms suspend’d from a tree-  
bough

Burning, the people while anchored at Hell's  
gate

On worlds laden with Oil will squirm. En-  
joyed

I should have, had I in operation

This scheme when in life and bloom was my  
little

World! A bath in Hell I'd given it,

And contents. To the verge of attraction

I should have towed it, then like as a fated

Soul in Niagara's suction whirls on, on

Ever faster until beneath the torrent

Mighty is entombed, thus the Penal fires

Mid all her torments would have drawn the  
world

And contents in its vortex, there consumed it.

By the substance of their bodies, the souls

Being scorched would like withering leaves,  
cringe

Float and flutter in the blighting heat.

“ But stay,

I would not the Oil sacrifice ! The souls  
Would be of no consideration.

For diversion and on great occasions  
Such as my birthday, those worlds whereon  
The people have become poor and caused me  
Some annoyance, and I have extracted  
All the valuables I'll have carted to  
And consumed in Hell.

“ I have spirit-pow'rs

Suggested for moving worlds, if they'll not serve  
My purpose I have still another  
Expedient which is as follows, as to the result,  
No question. For illustration, my little  
World, should I desire, along beside Jupiter  
Placed, a vast cable I should from earth  
To Jupiter stretch, to each planet fasten  
The ends ; the rotation of Jupiter, being  
The heavier body, by the winding

Of the rope draw Earth perforce to any  
Point desired ; the two existing planets  
Between. By this system to any place in space  
I can tow planets. From rays of light I'll  
Weave the ropes drawn from spheres far distant,  
yet

In direct lines of those to be moved.  
To put a perfect finish to this work  
I'll have temper'd the rays of light with Petro-  
leum  
Heat, insuring strength and durability.

“ I'd have no gas used, erewhile I said ; this  
will

Be true in one sense, no manufactured gas  
I will have used but all natural gas,  
For economy and profit I'll introduce  
And use in Oil distillation, providing  
No terms with the Devil satisfactory  
Can be made for heat. No doubt some of my

Old worlds, that for ev'ry other purpose  
Are useless, hold concealed in their bowels  
Trillions upon trillions of feet cubit  
Of natural gas. If this be so, I can  
It utilize to as equal good advantage  
As Oil, and at less expense. Out of a group-  
ing  
Of worlds choice, those that are the most densely  
Populated, rich in domestic comforts  
And conveniences of life, I'll select,  
As another blessing, pipe my gas to them  
For fuel. I'll a system organize  
For convenience and profit, to that  
Similar I had on earth ; however, instead  
Of so much per-month charging, by the foot  
I'll sell. I'll wheel these worlds north or out  
Of the direct rays of their suns ; push them  
To the cold latitudes ; increase consumption  
Of gas by an extra pressure of frigid  
Temperature, the while my profit increasing.

“ A practical man  
Might deem it impossible to connect  
Worlds that are constantly in rotary  
Movement with pipe, but I think that affairs  
I have arranged so as with rotation  
Not to interfere, or with most freaks  
That nature may see fit to indulge in.  
The scheme I’ve projected is to connect them  
With swing and swivel joints, this will of rotation  
And parallel movement admit, which is  
Sufficient. If this system does not work,  
Arrange, I will, the orbs to suit my  
Convenience ; thus all complicated  
Difficulties bridging.

“ Save in executions, I’ve intimated,  
I’d have no electricity used, but  
Reflection careful confirms the necessity  
In each world of establishing a telegraphic  
System, both for my profit and the people’s !

Convenience. In civilization the worlds  
That are young and backward, I'll forward  
Bring with the rapidity of thought, at once  
I'll establish the great civilizer  
Of creation, a system of Education ;  
Make the people prosperous, happy,  
And thus early have them contributing  
To me from a rich, productive virgin soil.  
Also, I must introduce to facilitate  
Trade (my profit always considered), a system  
Of well regulated railroads. I'll have  
No commerce commissioners to balk  
My arrangements but have all conducted  
As a government affair under one  
Organized head ; as all public necessities,  
Such as railroads, telegraphs and telephones  
Should be.

“ I'll arrange all traffic conveyances  
So they will be as easy of access



To one as another and with the same  
Efforts, like results will follow. This  
Equality will encourage an active  
Spirit in trade, thus good effects will ensue.  
I'll have no monopolies but what I  
Establish. Centralizing money to  
Throttle commerce is dangerous to my  
Interest and the general welfare  
Of the common herd. As much as practical,  
I must do away with money power,  
(Save in myself) ; it breeds extremes, poverty  
And affluence ; extremes breed trouble.  
I must try if possible, to keep the people  
On the same level, so mingling will assist  
Each other. Of course, eventually  
My steady drain will absorb their wealth,  
But they will go down on the same plane,  
Embraced by unsympathizing poverty  
And sympathizing friends, attributing  
The unavoidable results to fate.

“As I am confident the proposed system  
Will not work to an advantage on all  
Of my spheres, I shall need to study, somewhat,  
Into the dispositions of the numerous  
Kinds of human life that my diff’rent worlds  
Are peopled with, to determine the best mode  
Of government to subject them to.  
Varying soil and climate will produce  
A multiplicity of temperaments,  
Hence diff’rent systems in government will  
Need be enforced. It is possible and quite  
Probable, on some of my planets I shall  
Be compelled to organize a militant  
Form of government and force compulsory  
Co-operation, bring combatants  
And non-combatants together at the  
Bayonet’s point. Through militant power  
I can force people into a bulwark  
Of defence against themselves, thus forming  
A structure that will stoutly resist change.

As I develop this thought, it rather  
Pleases me. I'll centralize government  
Administrations through coercive movement  
So that it will run like clockwork at my  
Pleasure. I'll have an organization  
Of spies to examine into and report  
Upon the working of high officials  
And the people's doings, all being subject  
To my investigation and disposal.

“ Under my militant form of government  
I'll force the people to yield to me their  
Earnings, beyond that required to sustain  
A miserable existence. All must be  
Completely at my disposal, labor,  
Property and person. I'll subject the people  
To such a severe discipline so that I  
Can transplant them to this or that locality  
As I may direct without their having  
A voice in the matter. All persons,

Under pain of death will be required  
To render a true account of moneys  
Earned, and how disposed of to me. No citizen  
Can belong to himself or family,  
But, like chattels, to the government ;  
(Which is myself.) I'll allow no man  
A privilege but that I grant ; all will  
Be held responsible to my headship ;  
Individuals, military, .  
Political and judicial. I'll engender  
Into the militant pow'r such brutality  
That to commit murder will be but pleasure.  
I'll make crime habitual to them, so  
Liberty and life will be easily  
Disposed of. I'll force the people into  
A blind obedience ; I'll allow them  
To have no will of their own ; their will must  
Be mine ; they must have a passive expectance,  
And accept what comes to them through my en-  
tailed

System, without a murmur. My power shall  
be  
Absolute ; I'll absorb property, liberty  
And life at pleasure.

“ This militant system will only be  
Enforced where it is absolutely necessary ;  
On some of my worlds I'll be more lenient.  
I'll arrange to give the people leases, with the  
Consideration that half their product, all metal,  
mineral  
Wealth, and precious stones shall recur to me.  
The worlds that have grown old in service  
And lost their vitality, I will use  
As places to banish souls, those that are slightly  
Disobedient ; leave them in durance vile,  
And dumb silence for a time to suck their gums  
On the airless orbs for sustenance. This will  
Bring them under subjection. The old worlds  
That I cannot use, I will explode to clear

Space of stagnant matter ; the defunct orbs  
Useless rolling, concealed within their bowels  
Precious stones may be hid. All this debris  
    dead

Is not lost, its latent forces are but  
Hid. Out of this substance of seeming worth-  
    less

Solids, I will effect new orbs, gather  
What mineral wealth they contain, then have  
Spirits wheel the debris down to the  
Penal fires, to consume it. Out of the smoke  
And mist arising from Hell's vapors, create  
New worlds, the uniting elements  
Producing chemical action will again  
Bring forth gold and precious stones, then  
    smould'ring

Down to an inorganic life will shoot forth  
Rank growths of vegetation, that covering  
The soil in windfalls and drifts, which decom-  
    posing

Will produce Petroleum Oil. The internal  
Eruptions from pent-up gases will shoot forth  
In earthquakes, volcanoes, enclosing  
In their boweled depths this accumulation  
Of Oil ; holding it as in a reservoir  
For future development.

“ I will set this planetary system  
Under such an organized law of operation  
As ne’er was known before ; for my convenience  
Destroying worlds and building worlds that will  
Eclipse anything ever before wheeled  
In void. If I’d had the management  
Erewhile, of these heav’nly orbs, the affairs  
Of space would have been more systematically  
Arranged ; as it is I will make a complete  
Revolution in the solar system.  
I should not have had any dead stock in worlds  
On my hands, I should have had them all  
Advantageously utilized, previous

To their dotage. The one I'm sitting on, as 'tis,  
It's not worth the powder 'twill take to explode  
It, though, possibly there may be a few  
Gems concealed in its inner crevices.

“ ‘ Can I manage this stupendous scheme? ’  
(I asked myself, thoughtfully). ‘ Ah, yes!  
yes! ’

Confidently replied my heart. Just look,  
I mused, at what I used to do on my  
Little world ; it was a small matter  
Beside this, 'tis true, but it gave me practice,  
And confidence in my ability.

To review somewhat. I held the Railroads  
In the palm of my hand ; they dare not issue  
A rate I was opposed to, and made all  
Rates that I demanded of them. I controlled  
The Oil market and the turpentine trade ;  
Was prominent and successful in the  
Western land grab ; whatever I invested



In, proved successful. If there was any  
Loss to be sustained, I made other shoulders  
Bear it than mine. The Petroleum Oil  
Market was the base and backbone of my  
Operations ; I absorbed all who dealt  
Therein. It amused me somewhat to see  
The ' Buckwheats ' sell Oil-farms, or make a  
strike

In Oil, securing a snug fortune  
By accident, as it were, and attributing  
It to some imaginary smartness  
Of theirs, then go on the Oil market  
With their wealth and a self-puffed-up opinion,  
A di'mond gracing their shirt front, in lustre  
Not more luminous than the ruby tints  
Of their nose ; speculate, win a few dollars ;  
Ever suspecting 'twas through some smart-  
ness  
Of theirs ! though one might ask, no one could  
tell,

Wherein they were smart ; they could not tell  
themselves !

But the while wearing an air of importance,  
Thinking the Oil market could not run without  
Their assistance, that they needs must have their  
Say in its manipulation, to keep  
It alive.

“*I* was the power behind the throne ! I’d  
Allure them on, like water, wanton boys,  
Venturing farther and farther in the stream,  
Until swept away by the flood. I would  
Load them up with large quantities of Oil,  
Having the while some of my supernumeraries  
Whisper around that ‘ the market was on  
The advance ! ’ to make them eager for the bait.  
When they were well loaded with high-priced  
Oil

Let the market drop back a few cents,  
Keeping them paying storage as long as

I deemed it practical, then force the market  
Down to a beggar's price, increasing  
The charges on storage, until they were  
Compelled to sell their Oil way below  
The buying price ; thus storage and shrinkage  
In price would swamp them, financially.  
This was but one of my schemes ; I had various  
Ways of tripping them, always successful  
And where they least expected it. I found  
It the most potent to cast my line  
For the heavy dealers first, and bring them  
Floundering ashore securely hooked.  
Of course, during my angling for the large fish,  
Some few small speculators won by taking  
The reverse of the market from those I hooked ;  
But what odds? the money they made was as if  
Loaned. When I wanted it I set my nets  
And entrapped them. 'Twas enjoyment to me  
But it made them squirm, and if ever they  
Struggled to the surface, again, like as flies

For sweets gather around a molasses cask,  
For lucre, they would at it, and again  
Be fleeced.

“As brains are  
A simple compound of albumen, fat,  
Water, and phosphate salts, there can be no  
Reasonable excuse for a mistake,  
But I’ve sometimes believed that through the  
Oil regions  
The Lord must have substituted alcohol  
For water, such a reckless exhibition  
Of thought was displayed by this so-called  
‘Wise faction of speculators.’ It was  
So easy for me to fleece them, it became  
Monotonous and I had to devise  
New schemes for my diversion in land  
Speculations.

“The Independent Refiners were the most

Perplexing crew that e'er I encountered,  
During all my experience in business ;  
Not so much for their executive ability  
As from the various ways they had to annoy  
Me. I tried to buy them up to keep them  
Out of the trade, but I was only lending  
Fuel to the flame, for I gave them  
Exorbitant prices for their works and they  
Would use, as I might say, my money  
To fight me with ; build new refineries  
With an increase of capacity to flood  
The refined market with low-priced Oil.  
Then I tried to agree upon a uniform  
Price with them to sell Oil at, but this was  
An utter impossibility, they were  
Always slopping over in some way, couldn't  
keep  
To the agreement, so I left them disgusted.  
These were the only points wherein I was  
Weak ; however, I soon took another tack

Which proved more successful ; bought up Rail-  
roads !

Used ev'ry means to throw obstructions in their  
Way. I put what I called the freezing process  
To them. I, on illuminating Oil

Increased the freight on all their shipments,  
Having the Railroads give me a rebate

On same. I dropped prices where they sold on  
Illuminating Oil below the cost

To manufacture. I had the Railroads

Hold back their shipments until their customers  
(Where they sold at a profit) countermanded

Their orders. I had men paid to invent  
Schemes to harass their movements ; I placed  
All annoyances conceivable

In their way to thwart their success, until

They were at my mercy. It is most

Wonderful what an energetic man

Can do if he sets his whole heart and mind

To the issue !

“ One might wonder why I flooded the world,  
As I left but a straggling lot of Oil men,  
Like as a bird with wing broken, half famished,  
Seeking here and there for a paltry living.  
I confess 'twas a shame to take advantage  
Of such weak creatures, but finding ev'ry one  
Plotting for my ruin, I became somewhat  
Desperate and deemed it best to exterminate  
The whole race of man, though I must confess  
I felt a few pangs of remorse when I  
Saw the work of destruction go on.

“ 'Tis true I held regal sway,  
Sat like a god above the underlings  
On that mighty throne, Monopoly.  
Commerce was my cradle  
Of delight. I had affairs working under  
Such a system, all I needed to do, was  
To say to the Old World, ‘ contribute!’ and it  
Contributed. My voice was heard in ev'ry

Quarter of the globe, saying, 'contribute !'  
Twenty millions a year was my income,  
Sucked from the blood of toil ; my ghost of  
    oppression

Crept into the hovels of the poor  
Sapping their sustenance and lives, producing  
Misery broadcast as famine. I made  
Men so poor that poverty was ashamed  
Of them ! so poor it was a disgrace to live,  
Yet they clung to life with the tenacity  
Of a millionaire, struggling to save what  
They had been all their days trying to get  
Rid of, an impoverished life. I burnt the  
    mark

Of oppression on the forehead of Liberty ;  
I trampled it under the foot of Monopoly.  
I held a sway that made me practically  
King. But, as affairs have terminated,  
I regret not the world's destruction,  
Everything works as I desire."



We encountered en route through space a shooting

Star ; it moved with such terrific velocity  
That we, being near, the suction drew us in  
Its wake, holding us as a vise for millions  
Of miles. We marked terrible events  
From this wheel of fire. It onward drove like  
Lightning, passing world after world in the  
Constellation of the Hunting Dogs,  
Which were so much attracted to us, we drew  
Everything from their surface, rivers, lakes,  
Oceans, cities, living creatures, all were  
Engulfed and consumed in our tail of fire !  
I could hear the last wail of helpless creatures  
As they were being swept up by the mighty  
Rushing torrent of attraction.

Here water gas was produced with a wondrous  
Effect ; water amid the intense heat  
Consumed like Oil, burning in a blue transparent

Light, showing a perfect combustion,  
Surpassing all attempts ever made  
On earth. - To my dismay I discovered  
That the star was being forcibly  
Attracted by a sun ; ever increasing  
Its speed it drove directly to her centre,  
Trembling, with a crash struck the slag that  
shot

In space a flood of spangles, then through  
ether

Came dropping back, begemming the heavens  
With hailstones of gold ! Still on it flew  
Through the umbra, parting the molten wave  
On either side, forcing its way directly  
Through her metallic bowels. The great force  
Of opposition somewhat slackened  
Our speed, and the star, groaning, rock'd to and  
fro

In the molten inwards of the sun,  
As if struggling for an existence ;

The while sweeping on till, with a sound  
mighty,

It rushed from the sun's embrace, burned to a  
half

Consumed orb. Away back through the open-  
ing

The incoming lava-wave came surging

On our flank reaching out its tongue of flame

As if to entrap us, but we following

So close in the star's wake through the orifice,

Like as the Israelites crossing the Red Sea,

Before the incoming waves could close

The opening we escaped. So intense was

The heat floating o'er this bed of molten

Liquid, like as a cremating furnace

Was the air; had I longer to stay entomb'd

My soul must have perished therein. This en-  
counter

Somewhat dazed me and for a time I lost

My bearings. The star never stopped, onward

Flew, until it became so hot for us  
By consumption of accumulating  
Matter, though on the extreme verge of attraction,  
That it was imperative to rid  
Ourselves of this law, and we laid our plans  
For a coming crisis.

Directly in our front  
Was an orb, young in years, and green with  
fields,  
Summer was warbling forth a melodious  
Existence ; flowers and golden fruits maturing  
In fragrant bowers ; the awful majesty  
Of life was peeping from plant and palace.  
I held my breath waiting for an expected  
Crash, for two mighty orbs to come together,  
But my sight misled me somewhat ; missing  
The expected collision, we came so close  
That flound'ring for a time like as to a halloon

O'er trees and housetops, we sustained ourselves

On a huge immovable rock.

On the star flew!

Sucking every thing from the surface

Of this globe, consuming as it went, until

Exploding, vanished. This great frame we  
clung to,

Trembling, shot after for a distance,

But soon losing the force of attraction

Dropped behind in unknown ether. We, 'scap-  
ing

From her surface, left her heaving and swaying

To do or die, like an abandoned ship

At sea. I bethought me what a feast

The flames would have had should the star have  
flown

Past my little world, sucking in the Oil,

And the corpses in its depths!

“I must manage soon to get my refining  
Interest under way so as to  
Utilize this Oil, save an enormous  
Shrinkage that is constantly going on  
From evaporation. The nice green Oil  
That now floats light in gravity will soon  
Reduce to forty or less, making an  
Inferior grade of illuminating  
Oil, thus necessitating the expense  
And trouble of mixing it with new Oil  
That will be developed from as yet unknown  
Territory. To start with, I must needs  
Build new refineries, but as soon as I  
Can get the surface free from Oil on my world;  
I will utilize the vast amount  
Of still capacity and machinery  
Used in Oil manufacturing, left by  
The Independents and Myself. This will  
Be a very great saving to me.

“ Of course these suggestions are merely  
Speculative, as yet I cannot tell  
Just what will be the best mode of operation,  
But this will show itself in the course of time.  
I speak of this world’s more especially  
Being mine as I already have possession  
Of it ; but in reality the vast  
Universe is as much mine. I will as soon  
As I get thoroughly established,  
Issue a proclamation, setting forth my position  
As Ruler o’er creation, a King o’er kings,  
So that my regal sway will be clearly  
Defined. I’ll lay down a form of government  
For each sphere ; placing kings or dictators  
As I shall deem best suited for the people,  
All being subservient to my will.  
I do not so much mind the machinery  
I place to govern my worlds, but what ’twill  
Accomplish. I value that most, popular  
Or unpopular, which produces

The best results. I shall have spirits armed  
And equipped on every planet  
Sufficient to quell any outbreak or  
Disturbance that may arise 'mong the people,  
And if must needs be, sweep them from the  
face

Of existence. I think I've the workings  
Of the solar system thoroughly mapped out,  
And know just what course to pursue to secure  
The greatest revenue.

I'll have the diurnal rotary of each  
Planet working under such a system,  
So that day on each and every orb  
Will come about at one and the same time.  
I'll shorten the days to six hours by increase  
Of velocity of each orb, then as evening  
Rolls in I'll slacken the rotary speed,  
Making the nights longer, but having  
In the aggregate the same time consumed  
As before. This will be done to increase



The demand and sale of Oil ; the workingman's  
day

Will run into night, necessitating  
All shops and factories to be lighted  
By Petroleum. The Oil consumed by  
Each person will be charged, and on the day  
Of settlement deducted from their wages.  
The people will attribute this change  
In the planetary system to the freaks  
Of nature, thus relieve me of any  
Suspicion they might otherwise have,  
Enhancing the while my profits to an  
Alarming extent. I may, in remote  
Sections, extinguish some of my suns, and heat  
And light the worlds they shone upon by Oil  
And gas. Of course, as yet I cannot tell  
About this ; it will depend somewhat on  
Future Oil developments. If my  
Territory is prolific and bids fair  
To be long-lived, I can advance this scheme ;

If not, I will need to economize  
Somewhat by allowing my suns to do  
Their natural work." The workings of Heaven's  
Machinery was quite entertaining  
And somewhat instructive to me.

I saw Saturn  
And her great frame whirl'd in space by spirit  
pow'r,  
Accomplishing its diurnal rot'ry  
In ten hours. I had scanned the azure void  
Of Heav'n, dreaming in her translucent mist,  
Spent a delightful time on my belov'd  
Star Jupiter ; urged St. Peter to stay  
'Till I could bore for Oil ; but he'd demurred  
Saying that we had been three nights away,  
And my corse being exposed to the heat  
" Smelt rank " to Jupiter ; and that I " must  
hie  
Thither, take up my old abode again,

Set the heart in motion, and, by so doing,  
Stop decomposition." I had witnessed  
In panoramic form, from different spheres,  
The development of my little world  
From molten chaos to the present time.  
I wished to know somewhat of the constellation  
Of the Great Bear, and we directed our  
Way by the dazzling splendor of the Pole Star.  
This lord of the night never varying from  
Its course, but, sentinel like, ever at his  
Post, led straight our way. I saw en route, new  
    worlds  
Loom up, stars shoot from their spheres, heav'ns  
    succeed  
To heavens ; vast celestial objects come  
And go ; calorific powers transform  
Vapors into worlds, still the Eye of the North,  
In a fixed course, God-like, is ever true.

As I looked o'er these vast *nebulæ* fields,

A storm of thought through my mind swept.

“ How

Like Jove, who defied and held the lightnings

At bay, I, in the palm of my hand creation

Hold! This is no phantom thought, no hallu-  
cination

Wrought from fever-heated brains. No! no!

Those

Fields of nebulæ through the mighty void

Dotted golden with blinking stars, peeping

Out from cloud and sky at me suspiciously,

Are mine! They know,” thought I, “ from my  
transcendent

Skill, the controlling power belongs to me.

’Tis

So decreed. I’m to be Ruler! No power

Can wrest the sceptre from me. My advantage  
in life

Is above the opposing power of wisdom.

Providence hath so hedged me round, no force

Can change or effect a disturbance 'gainst  
My will ; all must succumb to my bidding."

As we lingered on the crescent,  
I bethought me, what a dreary prospect  
Is this moon. 'Neath our feet the cold dumb  
sod ;

Nothing above but a vast, viewless void ;  
Nothing around but that time had destroyed.  
Nothing was seen but had a dead dull glare  
While a bleak dread silence was ev'rywhere.  
There were no fanning zephyrs to cool  
The fevered brow, no clouds floating silver-  
tipped

Through fathomless space ; no lily-crest waves  
'Mid the waterless seas, shaking their cor'nets  
Of foam 'gainst jutting rocks. There was no  
sky ;

No azure vault to rest the eye ; the ear  
Detected no sound ; no murmur of voices

To cheer and comfort the weary soul.  
No song from sweet linnet or babbling brook  
E'er woke an echo ; unchang'ble silence  
Held sovereignty. No life, and no death  
On this airless orb.

Cities that had once been peopled,  
Stood all tenantless in this drear profound,  
Paved streets whereon great kings had trod, lay  
brown  
And echoless. Huge monuments of the dead  
That for years never an eye had rested on,  
Stood, spire-like, pointing to Heav'n for what  
had been.  
Pond'rous books of unknown tongue lay before  
me.  
In them were hid the secrets of the past.  
But we raised not a book, disturbed not a leaf,  
Left untouched the secrets of this sacred  
History.

I spoke to St. Peter, but my voice  
Fell lifeless on my ear. I then touched him  
And pointed to the moon's refulgent beams,  
Throwing a silv'ry glow of soft liquid light  
To the limpid air of my world below,  
As a sign that I would like to depart.  
He signified assent, and with renewed speed  
We both swift winged from this hearse of death.

As we neared  
Our journey's end, I could see my vessel  
Riding like a cork over deluged hills  
On the soft rocking of the oily wave.

As we nearer drew,  
My ghastly second self in the gleaming  
Moonbeams seemed so like a fright, I was loth  
To take it on again, and begged St. Peter  
(Although my pinions were weak from service)  
That I might return with him.

But he, denying, left me, half in fear,  
Half in disgust, quiv'ring o'er my loathsome  
corse.

I felt like winging in space without a guide,  
Till I touched the safety valve of the heart  
And the vig'rous pumping sent the warm blood  
Coursing through my veins, setting life's ma-  
chin'ry  
In motion.

I (still dreaming) thought to see the Saint  
Afar, outstretched my hand for him to take  
Me again through the alabaster gates.  
But it was then that the gates gently drew  
And left but Heav'n's impress my mind to view.  
While thus in Morpheus' languid arms I lay,  
Smooth as a tiller's plowshare cleaves the soil  
My staunch vessel's proud keel cut clear her way  
On through this limpid, liquid Sea of Oil.  
As the gold'n sea rose and sank in cadence



Gentle, all Heav'n's grandeur was refulgent  
To my tranced sense. My soul drew me to  
    realms  
Of love while my mortal form withheld me  
From above.

Thus for hours wafted my wings of thought on  
    high,  
Until below the pangs of hunger drew  
My sense. Now as Nature produced no seed  
Of life, my soul and body were in strife ;  
My several parts did demand meat  
And fruit of the soil, while the earth I'd flooded  
For greed of gain, and with it all matter  
That did life maintain.

While thus rent and pierced with pangs of hun-  
    ger,  
I saw, by Heaven's tapers, food which did  
Resolve itself into airy-like vapors

Transmitting odors and sustenance sweet.  
As my boat amid this life-saving air  
Moved along, through ev'ry fibre of my being  
It sent new life, new strength and new joy  
As it went.

Then, methought, I most earnestly did pray, —  
“Oh Father Omnipotent! who makest  
Life supreme, strengthen, prolong, make real  
My soul-fledged dream. Let thy glories that  
o'er me  
Have burst, environ me as sin does souls  
Deep cursed.”  
As thus I prayed, a voice methought I heard.  
Looking up, lo! forthcoming from his bright  
Estate, an Emissary of Heaven  
Stretching his broad pinions rainbow-like o'er  
The canopy of earth! Chafing the air  
In whispering whirlwinds he straight approached  
Apace.

I wore a feigned boldness, and questioned close  
His right on this mundane sphere. Said I,  
“You surely can have no business here, for I’m  
The only mortal alive on earth and need  
You not, nor want no parley with you.  
You have no lucre whereby I could profit;  
It must be through some misdirected  
Route you’ve led awrong your steps.” As he  
nothing  
Said, I feigned more boldness and questioned his  
right  
Asking “why he made so free as to alight  
On my vessel?” told him that it “was unsafe  
To trifle so with my sacred privileges;  
That my authority as King of the world  
And dignity as such must be respected;  
It must not be encroached upon wantonly;  
That I should be greeted as my position  
Demanded, courteously, and with due respect.”  
At this he to me closer approached, wearing

A smile of confidence that seemed to belittle  
Me, and addressed me thus, —

“ I am  
An Emissary of Heav’n, sent by the Great  
And All-Wise Power to hold a conference  
With you. I wish to draw a picture,  
A fair and truthful picture, that you may  
Look at, and see depicted your own  
Littleness.

“ Of Heaven, thou something know ;  
Thou know’st the requirements to retain  
A seat therein ; know’st man may look on  
Heav’n  
Even if his soul is reeking in sin,  
As ’twere, to see pleasures he might have gained  
If against justice he had not profaned.

“ Thou knowest man should make the well-being

Of human souls the chief end of life.  
Whene'er man has wrought for this great  
aim

He approves himself in the sight of God,  
And thus in one grand chain of love welds  
His way to Heaven."

My feigned boldness could not last.  
Why did I start and recoil at this voice?  
My faint heart trembl'd as to condemn itself.  
"The folly of my own imaginings  
Will betray me," thought I.

But yet that terrible voice went on, —  
"In Hell, torture is meted out to man  
According to his sins. If in the garb  
Of a saint he the Devil serves, then his  
Punishment is doubly severe. He who  
On Heaven his eyes have bent, then is doomed  
To everlasting punishment, has double

Portion of pain to bear, double misery  
Of Hell's torments to share.

“Man's days are o'ershadowed with the blessing

Or cursing of his life. The Power that shap'd thee

Made thee a free agent, thy form as temple  
For the soul ; a place wherein to build  
For lasting joys, or for future punishment.

“Man's pleasure should not come from hoarding  
wealth ;

Worldly gains are but dross ; the grasping  
Millionaire is poorer than the poor. He's  
cursed !

Alone in the love of God is wealth ; it cheers  
the soul and fills

Man with an eager desire to aid the weak.

This gracious inner longing to aid the poor

Is God-given balm, and drops refreshing  
On man's soul like dews from Heaven upon  
The with'ring leaf.

“ A God-loving man is a blessing ;  
He comforts all within his reach, and bestows  
Much charity upon the poor. One cannot  
Be God-loving and selfish, too. 'Tis priceless  
Riches, doing good ! The light of divinity  
Shines through the good man's acts. The poor  
thou

Mad'st live through all their days in poverty  
Find in death no punishment ; nothing  
Can deprive them of Heav'nly bliss, though like  
As a curse thine iron hand of oppression  
Crushed them while on earth.

“ When the Almighty fashioned thee in the  
womb

Of life, filling thy breast with Heaven's gift,

Charity, setting his sacred seal on thy head  
‘To give the world assurance of a man,’  
He expected gratitude for his labor  
In thy help of fellow creatures. From thee,  
Charity should have been heralded through  
The land like rain ; ringing in love-notes  
From hut to hovel, until echoing  
Was heard and felt in ev’ry nook and corner  
In the world. From thy hand, ‘Charity should  
Have gone forth assisting suff’ring humanity,  
Protecting it from the ills of life,  
As the mother hen her brood. Thou thought’st  
by  
Throttling commerce and bringing suffering  
man  
To thy feet, to be great ! Greatness does not  
Come from that source in life. He who would  
Be great is but a servant of the people.  
Man can find no better employment than  
To advance his brother’s condition in life.



What hast thou done but strangled all love and  
life?

See! whereon we float no shore we reach; no  
Leaf, bird or man e'er greets us. Sweet life  
from

The lap of earth ne'er more buds; plants, flow-  
ers,

Twigs and trees are swept by thee into the  
gulf

Of death. Dost thou call this poverty of soul,  
Greatness? 'Would I bid thee impoverish thy-  
self

To help fellow creatures?' No! 'tis writ,  
'Man shall to himself no violence do.' "

“ Oh!

This commandment I've been most faithful to,  
Beloved and Righteous Ruler on high.  
Not even the length or depth of a hair's  
Breadth; not the tiniest nicety

Of a molecule's width, not the turning-point  
Of one small iota, have I wavered  
From this path of duty."

"He, who in any way against his neighbor  
By malicious desire, or base intrigue  
Doeth violence, shall inherit  
The Kingdom of Hell!"

"Oh Thou, whose eyes command eternal space,  
Search not my ways too close, for fear that I  
might  
Through a greed of gain, have sinned in thy  
sight."

"Man must not take by pillage or by fraud  
His neighbor's sustenance."

"Oh, Great and Most High," I prayed, "have  
mercy

On me, thy child, floating on this fathomless  
sea ;

Oh, forsake not this single soul, drifting

On, on, forever on, I know not where.

Thou who doth dwell within the spirit

Of all things, reach out a protecting hand

To me ! Have mercy on my wretched state."

My heart did swell within me, and I felt

This shoreless stretch of wealth for which I'd  
planned,

Had placed my soul in jeopardy.

If the world was mine, to what end was't  
gained

If my soul was doomed to eternal pain?

Methought,

"Strange contrast to my wretched mind's this  
sea,

That like a liquid mirror calm is flowing,

The swift unfoldment of my future state  
Comes o'er me like a plague.

"I'm cast like a man in the desert wild,  
Wayward and trackless is the course ; all drear,  
No cheer, no fruit, no flower doth him surround.  
From me Hope's fled. I'm left on a barren  
waste,

Revolving in the boundless blue of eternal space.  
What a sad change is this that comes o'er my  
fate !

Erewhile creation vast was too narrow  
For my soul, now no place so small but I  
Would hide."

"Thou should'st not  
Have in any way intimidated  
Fellow man ; should'st have left the avenues  
Of trade open to all alike. Thou should'st  
Have shunned conspiracy of ev'ry kind,

Especially that which would defeat honest  
Toil. As thou hast conspired and injured  
Fellow man, thou art doomed, and Heaven  
Thou shalt not see ! ”

“ Oh Most High ! ” in anguish then I cried,  
“ Have thou compassion on me, I pray thee,  
On my knees beg I you sentence to stay,  
Until here below I can penance do  
That will save my soul.”

“ Dost thou once think,” replied the awful  
voice,

“ Thou canst drown God’s soil, devastate, lay  
waste

God’s whole domain with Petroleum Oil,  
And not feel the hand of Justice on thee?  
They, who of the great bounties of Nature  
Have shared most lavishly and selfishly  
Have kept the necessities of life away

From suffering man, must bide their time in  
Hell.

“Hast thou helped the weak, or hast led the  
blind

Or, hast converted the wisdom that God  
Has given thee into base, selfish ends;  
Drowning not only man in all his sin,  
But the beasts of the wood, and stifled  
Birds of the air.

“Thou hast revolted! turned  
Traitor to God! Swept away his flocks, drown’d  
All earth that beat and palp’tated with life  
And joy. You stole upon the secrets  
Of the night when earth was in darkness  
Crown’d when nature lay diffused in sleep;  
when

All was lulled to a quiet, unsuspecting  
Rest, to the secret safety-valve of the world,

To touch was death to all but thee. From  
Thy premeditated designs to drown  
The world thou did'st build a bark, a craft  
Of ingenious device, modeled to float  
On Oil. When all was ready, in the dread  
hour

Of the night, secretly you touched the valve  
That deluged the world with Oil, then stole  
away

For safety unto thy bark that lay moored  
In Oil Creek, hard by, there, with an inner  
Self-satisfied air watched the sad work  
Of destruction go on until nature  
Lay buried at thy feet. You've plucked the  
sweets

From earth, the soul from man, blasted all life ;  
Sent the tide forever searching, never  
Reaching a shore. The mighty ocean  
That before naught but God could stay, as it  
swept

Eternally on in a trackless swell,  
Pointing to the great day when the fathomless  
Depths should give up the dead, now lies a  
prey

To thy wilful designs. The cataracts  
That went pouring adown the mountain side  
In dazzling splendor are no more.  
How inferior is thy insignificance  
To the great power that thy wanton hand  
Has destroyed ! ”

“ Oh, stay thee ! ”

I cried, “ I can endure no more. I here  
Invoke in thy presence, the Almighty  
To lift this blubb’ry Oil from off the face  
Of earth, and restore to drown’d man his life  
Estates. Oh, give me but the power to purge  
The innermost recesses of my soul, free  
From sin by doing penance, and hereafter  
I will live grand and pure as the ever



Filt'ring waters, till the irresistible  
Current of time will have done with me here."

"All thy world in solemn gloom displays  
A mocking contrast to better days ; days  
Of life and cheer, of love, comfort, and hope  
In Heaven. A deep, sad, solemn repose  
Lays all around, no welcome sound, no voice  
Invades this mighty deep ; nothing save  
Reflected fancies of death. Dreadful sights  
To compare with earth that was ! To satisfy  
A greedy desire for gold, you wrought yourself  
A tomb of fire ! This sea you reverence  
As a god, will plague your life as pestilence  
Did sinful man's when he at will roamed  
O'er the sod. What say you?  
'You would but repent.'  
Vain foolish man, there are no acts or words  
Could purge your guilty soul all free from  
sin !"

“ But should I yield to you my Oil, all my Possessions, my power, what then? ”

“ You have no  
Lasting possessions, no power, but life,  
And that you’ve cursed by greed of gain, cut off  
Your own enjoyment by selfish ends.  
Consider, — what is wealth?  
Is’t Gold? Oil? No! no!  
A kindly hand and a cheerful heart, a clear  
Conscience, honest efforts; faith and love  
In an Over-ruling Power; such is  
An everlasting wealth, a foundation  
For an eternal life. What are riches  
In gold, in Oil, compared unto this?  
Though you possess the whole, you get nothing  
But what you eat, drink, and wear; you are as  
poor  
As a beggar, with all this world at your feet.  
Ah, man! man! thy life is vain; the days thou

Should'st end in peace, thou shalt end in pain,  
Then pain follows pain. The vital air of sin  
Environs thee, this gloating poison in your  
Soul that's plucked God's and man's harvest,  
will end

Thy days in shame. When thou yield'st this  
mortal

Breath and wing to the sable shades of dishonor,  
While sitting in grief, with trembling mien,  
such

Pains, aches, and horrid sights thine eyes will  
behold

Thou wilt rebel against thine own lost soul  
For thy past atroc'ties to man ; there beg  
And plead for mercy in the most pitiful  
Lamentations. All comforts of life  
That's past will rise before thee as mocking  
Visions ; thy home comforts, all that thou most  
Desired in earthly life will pest thee with  
A mocking counterpart of their reality.

Mountains of gold will rush past thee, producing

An eager longing for their possessions ;  
Taunting pictures of bonds, stocks, will feast  
thy

Greedy sight to a bitter disappointment.

Thy brain will register sweet images  
Of quiet, while Hell's torments will fill  
Thy frame with unrelenting pain. Od'rif'rous  
Plants that on earth thou most enjoyed, you'll  
see

In Hell ; when you do but seek their arbors,  
They will yield such a revolting stench, with  
Nausea and purging you will flee.

The shades of Hell are so hot the flesh becomes  
Crisp and cracks ; great chunks break off, leaving bare

The bone that filters the marrow through its  
Pores, burning like unto a small blue flame  
From an unconsuming gas jet.

“What! pardon? No! no!  
As thou through all thy life thus far hast moved  
An enemy to God and man, thy future  
Is firm fixed; there is no law that can change  
The decree; the mandate of Heav’n’s gone forth,  
And the authorities of Paradise  
Have attested to thy fate. Hell’s thy future  
Home. Do I think there is a chance for you?  
Thy chance of Heav’n doth as poorly sit  
As does thy dead earth to bloom with life again.”

As these last words were spoken, he vanished.  
Lo! then forth came on the wave’s crest  
Grinning skulls with ugly sightless eyes!  
These horrid maggots so wrought in my brain  
That at every glance I gave, they seemed  
To expand and distort into ten thousand shapes,  
Sending a horror through my frame, as if  
Some energetic power from Hell’s core  
Was throbbing in my heart.

“Father of Mercy!” I cried,  
“I, thy humbled child, bow me down crushed  
In spirit to pray; my hopes are fled, unless  
Thee my poor chained soul will but hear and  
    heed.

I pray for those that ’neath my feet lowly lie;  
Those whose tortured souls deep in Hell do languish;

Oh take them to thy realms of bliss on high!  
Lift me from my wretched state, and pity me,  
Father, for Pity’s sake.”

Then, methought, an icy chill  
Convulsed my frame. It now seemed freezing  
    cold,

Yet ’twas not winter. “It must be,” said I,  
“The law of Nature has o’erleaped itself  
And fallen back into the arms of Frost,  
Or why this pale, sickly look! Wherefore this  
    numbing

Cold, erewhile so warm and serene?" This  
seemed

Most strange, and yet to me it was real.

As the cold increased,

Great peaks of the highest mountains loomed up,

Through the congealing Oil ; barren and bleak

They stood, shrouded in winding sheets of snow,

As monuments to the dead world.

Silently the fabric of my Dream

Arose in pure transparent peaks of ice,

Till Frost had locked the world in solidity. .

I gazed mournfully on this scene, shiv'ring

And shaking, as was my congealing blood

Slowly sealing up the channels of life.

That dread empire, Frost, had now closed all

Resources of Nature. I'd nothing to do

But wait. Living, I silent stood within

My ice-bound tomb.

Every hour I noted

The dissipation of heat. Frost  
Glistened in the sun's warmless rays. All light  
And heat were but as a drear mockery  
To the time.

Blocks of ice roofed by flakes of snow  
Environed me. There was nothing but ice,  
Crag and peaks of ice! All was a drear waste  
Of bleak despair. My heart sickened. turned  
cold,  
And lay like lead in its cerements. Thought I,  
"Nature is a tomb, a blank monument  
To what has been. Her spirit of life's fled.  
I, alone, stand mid this wreck and ruin,  
Forlorn. Darkness sits brooding in my soul;  
I wait the coming of I know not what,  
I trust that it may be joy, but alas,  
I fear eternal sorrow."

The waning moon shone in pitiful paleness



Above the cloud-tipped pyramids of ice ;  
Winds, in doleful sounds and mournful cadence  
Swept ever through my useless rigging.  
My life was as death, drear, cold, and barren.  
My stagnant blood went shivering backward  
To its source ; my soul was hopeless and forlorn.  
There were no joyous thoughts to give me cheer,  
For blasted hopes there came no welcome sound.

I was sick of life which bore no fruit for me,  
Mem'ry pierced my heart with pictures of the  
past.

The running brook, the church upon the hill,  
On them to think my eyes with tears did fill.  
No more a joy, was life to me, below,  
My spirit was bleeding o'er its wretched state,  
My shaft, then flying from the golden past  
Aimed for death's river quiv'ring on the blast.  
Hell sure was gaping wide before my eyes.  
I was loth to die, and was loth to live.

Life or death (if my choice I could but take),  
I knew not which, so wretched was my state.

“ Oh God of Love ! ” I prayed, “ one boon but  
grant

To me; roll back the years till I clasp  
Mother’s knee, and let my yearning eyeballs  
Once more trace the smiles, joys and shadows  
Upon her sweet face. Oh, but let me die  
On her dear breast ! I’d lived a goodly time  
When I her bosom pressed.

“ But no ! no ! no ! this never can so be.  
Ah, well ! soon from this living death I’ll flee.  
All around the wind of Death has blown,  
While mighty swaths the scythe of Time hath  
mown.”

As I stood bemoaning my sad fate,  
I thought to feel a breath of temp’rate air

Fan soft my cheek ; a hundred changes came  
O'er my face, while a thousand swept my soul.  
My heart, anon so cold, now burned with the  
fire

Of youth ; with joy I paced the smooth surface  
Of my ice-girt ship.

I noted the blubbery Oil take shape,  
And marked the mountain peaks disappear,  
As the Oil expanded to the sun's heat ;  
I rejoiced as I floated once again  
A thing of life.

As the airy heat danced and quivered  
Over my face, touching as with a balm  
My frost-nipped soul, I gazed about with de-  
light  
On the broad bosom of my em'rald sea,  
While the sun's warm rays went quivering  
down

The Arctic cope of Heaven. I could picture  
In the sky the fair mirage of a verdant rivage ;  
Castles towering on the peak of some beetling  
bluff,

Contending armies in deadly combat  
For its supremacy ; sabres gleaming  
In air ; fleecy clouds issuing smoke-like  
As from heavy guns, while in the distance  
Was heard a low mutt'ring sound, then dense  
and black \*

The angry sky was seen ; as lightnings leaped  
And quiv'ered through the dun clouds, thunders  
burst

Forth in tremendous explosions making  
The eternal space of Heaven tremble  
To its base.

The lightning blue from the torrent's blast  
Shivered, rent in twain my stately mast,  
And shot its zigzag streaks of vivid Hell

Thwart the Oily flood, crash on crash, pell-mell:  
I thought that Nature's day, and all was done,  
That earth to the fiery fiend must succumb.

"Father Omnipotent!" I cried, "make Thou  
The lightning to but stay its course, or far  
From my combustible sea spend its force."

My voice was smothered as burst the blackened  
Heav'ns in tongues of fire and harsh confusion.  
The elements battling with dire alarms  
Shook the sky, chafing it with streaks of 'lectric  
Light, making doubly terrible the black'ned  
Night. The hurling thunders rolled from pole  
to pole,  
Trembling the earth as fear quaked my soul;  
Red thunderbolts seemed to environ me,  
I would but escape! Where could I flee?  
"What horrid death," thought I, "if in this Oil  
The electric spark should fly!"

Then the forked lightning rent asunder  
The black'ned sky; 'twas like a snake with  
hellish

Venomed tongue darting at ev'ry object  
That it would shun. It split the clouds in twain,  
And then, into the green sea it went.

Far and farther fire licked the liquid main,  
Till flaming ramparts arose like walls;  
To escape all efforts vain. What could strife  
Avail when the devouring element sought  
The consuming of my life?

The curling flames upward leaped and licked the  
stars,

That like rockets in the darkest night downward  
Fell, bursting, begemming all the Heavens  
With jewels of light. The Oily sea before  
Me lay a sheet of flame, a bed of fire;  
A counterpart of Hell's desire!  
Satan, sure, must have swept the skies with his

Flaming wheel, no other power would have  
Wrought this scene of woe. "Earth," thought  
I, "cannot

Withstand this tide of flame, melting she must  
Float a metallic flood, or bursting, in space  
Find an ignoble grave." Round and round  
The mighty cauldron boiled, seething and hissing  
Till, shudd'ring, the earth to her very poles  
Convulsive shook.

Then a whirling, eddying blast of fire  
And stifling smoke enshrouded me. "Oh,  
God!"

I groan'd in agony, "shield me, I pray Thee,  
From this frightful death." Soon the scathing  
Flames my spars did lick, oh! those livid  
tongues,

Of Hell, how they stuck! They cringed like a  
cur

At my feet, yet repelled every effort,

All means defeated to quench their hot thirst ;  
Ever becoming stronger and fiercer  
By what they fed on.

Anon,

My vessel's course was stayed, her masts, they  
fell !

Nowhere could I flee. Then, as if to make  
Existence still more appalling, Hell's  
Dumb reptiles took shelter along with me.  
Over my flesh their cringing bodies crawled,  
From heat distilling pois'nous ooze. Their  
shrieks

Of pain mocked my own sad doom. I prayed  
God

To " end this torture dire ! to quench this life  
Of mine, or extinguish this mad fire."

Then methought,

Those souls that I supposed were in the Pool,



(And of all I most earnestly wished there),  
The Producers and Independent Refiners  
Peered at me from Heaven and heard my  
Supplications. I could have endur'd anything  
But this; that they should enjoy Heav'n's high  
estate

While I in torture pent, was more than Hell's  
Punishment. Oh, it was too much! I prayed  
That the red flames would devour me outright,  
That I might be fore'er hidden from their sight.  
To see and know the very men in life  
Whose exaltations I opposed, whose sway  
I checked, and whose very persons I loathed  
With consummate hatred were dignified  
In Heav'n unto a perfect unity  
With angelic life, was more than nature  
Could endure. My heart swelled and wellnigh  
burst

With its grief and mortification. Ay,  
My very hair seemed like hot irons

Goadng, burning, and searing my tortured  
Brain, so horrible was my Dream-wrought  
Punishment.

Methought a railway train was running through  
The windings of my nature. I could feel  
The red-hot coals singe and burn my soft flesh,  
As in languid curves through the ways of my  
Vile and crooked life it forced slow its way.

Then the world went rocking, heaving, sway-  
ing,

In convulsions, till fissures grav'tating  
To the earth's centre opened up, taking  
In seas of Oil to be vomited forth  
In volumes of flames and heat that melted  
The earth's substance into molten liquid.  
Then lowering clouds that hung low with  
floods  
Of water burst their cerements, letting forth

Their contents into the earth-centring  
Crevices. Like as to a boiler  
From over-pressure of steam explodes,  
Did the earth in atoms shoot forth in space.

Then,

Methought, my soul in a new form winged  
forth ;

Fearful of the falling débris it sped  
As a thief from Justice. So fast I flew  
The world's chaos of bones and coffin-cinders  
Soon fell behind my swift expanse of flight.  
On I flew ! past countless myr'ads of solar  
Systems ; on, on beyond this wilderness  
Of worlds till the galaxy of Heaven  
Was hid from view. On, so deep into  
The abyss of distance that the sun's rays  
Gleamed ghost-like amid the sable shades  
Of suburban Hell.

Down into this illim'table dungeon  
Of hoary blackness I long stood gazing  
With useless eyes, till they starting seemed to  
burst

From their sockets. I could see, not with eyes,  
Yet with other senses which were so acute  
That all Hell's horrid creatures seemed before  
me.

I trembling prayed to the Prince of Darkness  
For but a moiety of my former peace ;  
But alas ! he laughed my supplications  
To scorn.

Then the scene was sadly changed ; with its  
change

There was increase of pain. The intense heat  
Sapped the marrow from my bones, elicited  
From me low stifled moans ; still was I loth  
For the Independent Oil men to know  
What I suffered deep down in the dark confines

Of the damned, and slinking crawled behind  
A projecting rock to hide.  
Then, methought, my sight was cleared with  
euphrasy,  
And I met monopolists, stock-jobbers,  
Railroad kings, murderers, thieves, incendiaries,  
And vile leaders of political rings !  
Men with subtlety and guile in their souls.  
I tried to flee from them as from a ghost,  
But I could not escape. These double-tongued  
Dev'ls proclaimed me leader of their hellish  
Train.

Such horrid sounds and sights,  
Of infernal hue came from this damned pit  
I shudder whenever I think of it !  
There were offsprings of pride, in life, honored,  
In Hell blaspheming their names.

I saw all the Stygian sufferings

Portrayed in the sins of those creatures, Ay,  
And felt the pangs myself. My throat was  
parched.

With heat; I could hear and see trickling  
streams

At a distance; great cakes of ice were before  
My sight. I yearned for them, I rushed, for  
them

Through dim vapory mists of scalding dew,  
Yet nearer unto them I never drew.

I could see broad lakes, lashing their waves  
'gainst

The massive rocks, sending their milk-white  
spray

High in space, as if to augment my thirst.

As on I sped, my parched tongue hung  
As if to catch descending drops of spray;  
No moisture fell save to blister, as it touched.  
On I flew till my agonizing pains

Burst forth in horrid shrieks that went echoing  
Terrific through the sable vaults of Hell.

“Oh!” cried I, “if I were but on earth again,  
I would treat all mankind as my equals.  
I’d earn an honest living as did just men.  
I would not let railroads discriminate  
In my favor ’gainst the people’s interest,  
But if honestly I should amass wealth  
Beyond any reasonable demand,  
I’d help the cripple ’long the way of life,  
That he also in his turn might give aid  
To whomsoe’er he might.”

Then, methought, I came to a lake of Oil  
That looked very like old Bradford stock sub-  
jected  
To a high pressure of Hell’s heat, seemingly  
Undergoing a distillation. At first  
I became somewhat interested, and watched

The smooth surface of the Oil, as, like a mirror  
It shone, reflecting the little globules  
Of vapor, that rose and floated to the utmost  
Height, roofed and walled in by Hell, condens-  
ing,

Fell back to repeat again the e'er revolving  
Process like as to the continuous  
Distillation of a Van Sycle Still.

The vapory globules mingling, so blended  
With the substance of Hell as to make  
Sulphuretted hydrogen, emitting  
An offensive odor like unto decomposed  
Eggs. This produced such a nausea that I,  
Stifling, searched for a manhole through which  
to 'scape, it

Seeming as if I was enclosed in a heated Still.  
But this means of exit being fastened  
I bethought of, and rushed for, the Vapor-pipes,  
Squeezed through with the venomous odors  
And escaped by the way of the Tail-house,



Through a two-inch pipe, thinking to elude  
My difficulties, but 'stead enhanced  
Them, for I encountered Lucifer,  
And trusting to the endurance and speed  
Of my tried pinions sought to escape him by  
flight,  
The while making fiendish faces at, and  
Letting forth tones of mocking satire  
That greatly incensed him. He, with resent-  
ment strong,  
In hot pursuit forth sped to chase me down  
And flay my flesh. To see the visage  
Of Lucifer in rage, terror seized me  
And I regretted my rash step. What could  
I do but flee? To sue for mercy was vain,  
So I put forth all efforts to escape.  
This goaded Lucifer to his utmost speed,  
And we both like lightning flew, I with fear  
Which nerved me to the task, Lucifer in wrath  
To chastise me. The imps as if mocking

Spurred their leader to the chase until to me  
He closer drew, not within arm's reach, how-  
ever,  
But with bearded tail outstruck, laying my flesh  
Open to the bone from hip to shoulder.  
I, from force of the blow, being disabled  
Could not farther flee, so about forth turned,  
With tooth and nail seized upon Lucifer,  
It being my only chance, trusting  
To o'er-power him. Close embraced we both  
Downward fell into the boiling Pool ;  
Lucifer being undermost sunk beneath  
The surface, and strangling straight sought  
breath ;  
This separated us and he  
Forth swimming left me, helpless, crippled  
In the heated lava that coursed through my  
wound  
Inflicted sores until I burst forth in shrieks  
Of pain for help ! This devil heeded me not

Until he reached the shore, then sent his imps  
To bring me unto him, and like as  
A porous plaster adheres to hair and flesh,  
Lucifer glued me to his side, addressing me  
thus :

“ I am Prime Minister  
Unto his Satanic Majesty,  
Sent by him to judge you by impartial  
Scrutiny as to the enormity  
Of your fallacious guile.”

I implored his Lordship,  
“ To deal with due consideration with me.  
To think I prayed him, of the souls I'd launched  
Into his care by drowning the world with Oil ! ”  
Said I, “ Through me you've received many  
souls  
That would otherwise have reformed and gone  
The primrose way to Heaven.”

“Yes! yes!” said he, “this is all very true,  
But you seem to forget that in drowning  
The world, you’ve extinguished all life thereon,  
Thus ruined all my prospects from that sphere.  
You’ve stopped a resource of souls that for  
    millions  
Of years would have been the recipients  
Of my spleen!

“Yes! ninety per cent would have come to me.  
From that small world I was getting more souls  
Than from all the rest of my territory.  
Not that alone, you have quite disheartened  
The devils that I had on earth recruiting  
Souls for the Stygian Pool. Now, as they  
Are out of service they are rioting  
Through the bowels of Hell most disgracefully.  
And you, you alone, are responsible  
For all this trouble.”

Thus conversing, it was not long before my  
Curiosity was aroused by loud  
Noises hard by, looking, in horrid shapes  
I saw all the usurers of earth, towards  
Me move. Straight terror convulsed me lest  
they

Should break their bonds and seize upon me, but  
Viewing closer their tumultuary  
Proceedings, I was soon convinced that they  
were

In parley o'er the rate of interest  
To exact for some imaginary loan.  
There were no transactions, but dreadful phan-  
toms

Of, in their imaginings. Here, I saw  
All frailties of life confusedly thrown  
Together ; God-mocking christians ; no charity,  
No love but for self. Men with beastly  
Appetites for drink ; men so penurious  
They were dishonest, petty thieves. It seemed all

The immortal venom of earth together  
Like worms through the lust of sin in pain  
And contention were crawling.

Torrents of shrieks and moans  
In tumults of unrelenting pain greeted me.  
Horrors horrid came welling up to my sight  
From this pit of infamy. Black Sin,  
Scathed and scarred in welt'ring, misshap'n  
souls  
Was before me. "Oh!" thought I, "what a  
curse  
Hangs o'er this frightful region." As I stood  
Spellbound, Lucifer asked, "Why on those souls  
I so long gazed?" I answered, "I know not  
Save from pity." Said he, "While on earth  
they were  
Vile wretches of the lowest order  
And deserve not pity. You need all your  
Inborn sympathy for self." Then, methought

A venomous snake with forked tongue shot  
Darting pains through my loins as it coiled  
About me. Clammy scales crept slowly  
O'er my flesh, and I, shudd'ring, griped with  
frenzy

The snake's protruding head, squeezing until  
It lifeless fell at my feet prone down.  
Then it seemed I had strangled a creature  
Human! one most fair. I, shrieking, tried to  
escape,

But to Lucifer seemed close bound;  
And could not stir! The horror of my position

Was inexpressible. Fast stayed o'er my  
Bloody work my revolting soul must soon  
Have lost its reason but for Lucifer's  
Shutting from my ken this aspect horrible,  
And I gave forth a sigh like one relieved  
From pain. Mid all this darkness Lucifer  
Signified his pleasure and he leading,

We both winged like bats through the blackened  
void

Until of a sudd'n we alighted on a projecting  
Rock that low'ring o'erhung a lake of sin.  
My sight here being restored I directed  
My gaze to a scene the most of all I would  
But shun.

Directly in our front, methought  
I saw my royal crew of earth welt'ring  
In a pool of burning Oil, that stank so like  
Lima stock but for the torments  
And visible presence of Lucifer  
I surely must have thought me on earth.  
These godless wretches seemed wading in this  
Burning Oil to their armpits, the wound-inflict-  
ing  
Flames in fest'ring horrors marked their features.  
As to each in turn I my gaze directed,  
They seemed most faithful unto their old



Employer and employment, for with  
Uplifted hand above my ken to make sure  
My focus one I beheld in scrolls of flame  
Writing, as if working on some private  
Papers. He should have passed unknown but  
for his

Writing (so awful was his flame-eaten flesh) ;

I knew it well ; not alone that, however,

The dazzling real'ty of base transactions

That on earth were secrets between us, now stood

Out in letters of flame, as startling

As Belshazzar's writing on the wall.

This double-hoofed devil exposing my

Secrets incensed me. Then I saw menials

That I'd paid on earth as spies, in close

Communion, as if o'er some mean matter

Of weighty importance were debating ;

Planning some diabolical scheme

To entrap the Independent Refiners.

They all did sigh sore-tortured, save one, and he

Was a lean, hungry, Cassius-looking cur,  
So black in visage that mid the darkness  
Of the pit, him around all seemed white.  
As he thus sat, emitting flame from his  
Steel-plated nostrils he evinc'd an enjoyment  
That a veteran would experience  
In smoking a fragrant Havana  
After long abstemiousness. I had fear  
Of him, however valuable to me  
On earth to assist in doing my secret work.  
"He is a Judas," said I to myself,  
"Should he see me he would betray me, his  
Old master ; should he outspcak or laugh,  
It would most damaging be to my cause,  
That I'm before His Highness pleading."  
So I slunk back as if to hide, but he,  
Seeing this movement, defined my motive  
And leading, they all laughed with a horrid  
Hellish meaning that unto Lucifer  
Exposed my position, for he after,

Close eyed me with a suspiciousness that  
Bespoke eternal vigilance on my  
Movements.

In glancing around o'er this assemblage  
Of incarnate fiends, I could not recall  
One of all my many partners or employees  
But what were here. I, thinking them  
Good, likely fellows, asked Lucifer about  
This crew. (I'd thought in drowning them to  
send  
Them to Heav'n to bless me, 'stead they were  
here  
To curse me.) In brief he replied :

“ The reason of this is  
That all Monopolists and whosoe'er  
Encourages their work, or profits from  
This base mode of money making, their souls  
Are Satan's.”

“ Great Lucifer, if so you feel inclined  
Impart to me who are those wretched souls  
Whose faces front this way, even now?  
Those whose forms are stooping low hard by  
where  
That black fruitage grows that’s pois’nous,  
deadly  
To the taste. Those corporal festerings  
That stand close, but all sep’rate from my crew,  
Writhing, fast stayed in the earth as if like seeds  
They grew rooted to the sod? Such tortures  
Are in their mien they sure are some doomed  
Immortals for bloody sins on earth,  
To thee committed.”

But Lucifer, straight answering, said,  
“ No, they are not for murder held but for  
Controlling the Trusts of earth and in  
Advancing prices on staple products  
Made hungry many a deserving mouth.

None of this class escaped us, we had them  
Registered for our keeping long before  
They left the mortal form. No death-bed  
Repentance could shield them from their just  
Punishment; and thou mighty leader  
Of Monopoly and Trusts shall feel doubly  
The inflicting torments of Hell."

" Oh Great One !

Change thou the spirit of thy proem,  
And let fall lightly upon me thy wrath.  
On earth I revered thee unknown to the Church.  
I keep nothing from thee, I am for thee.  
Have compassion on me, thy co-worker."

But Lucifer replied,

" Your greedy calculations of selfishness  
Being subversive unto holiness  
Has caused your downward fall to sable shades,  
'Stead of rising to ulterior perfection.

We like this malicious working in souls,  
But yours is too sordid ; it has a horrid  
Effect over our reign of contention.

And thus 'tis an everlasting disgust  
Sums up all previous dealings with you.

You now come here with a supple spirit

And laudable craftiness that would do

Great credit to his Satanic Majesty,

Waiting for the first opportunity

That presents itself to seize on Satan's

Substance and then convert it into

A Monopoly.

“ Hell teems with souls

Of both noble and ignoble extraction,

But there is not one within my keeping

That's as base and hollow-hearted as thou !

There hangs a curse about thy neck that would

Set Hell groaning 'neath its weight ; thou hast

More arts of cunning than would cheat Satan

Out of his throne. I am after thee  
So be wary, for on thee I'll vent my spleen."

"Noble Lucifer!" I cried, "on my weak  
spirit

Vent not your royal malice that with fear  
Like a shadow's now trembling before you.  
I'll abdicate my Sea of Oil to you  
And pipe it to the nether depths of all,  
If thou'lt but let me off."

"Vile dissembler!

Do you think to stand in false light to Satan,  
As you have to God's people, by saying  
You'll abdicate your Oil and pipe it to Hell?  
Base deceiver, think'st I know not thy world  
Is no more? I know all thy treachery  
Unto man; thy crooked ways in life  
Are no secret to me.

“Thou thought’st to reach the resplendent  
summit

Of primeval glory by displaying

A false face. Throw by the mask and stand  
forth,

Stamped for the red consuming penal fires.

I know thee for what thou art, a devil

In the guise of an angel! The spirits

Of Hell shall seize thee.”

Oh! what agony tore my soul, as upon

The utmost heights of a barren perpendicular

Rock, by winding paths and gorges deep-laid,

He dragged me. I closed my eyes to shut  
out

The aspect horrible that before me

Lay. From the abyss deep down, weltering

In their lust, wrangled crooked perverse mon-  
sters

Of Hell, whose jaws kept working



With scissor-like movement to catch my trembling  
ling

Bulk, then suspended in space by this devil  
Lucifer.

As I passed slowly, surely  
To my doom how I did plead for mercy.  
But Lucifer scoffed at my prayers and said,  
“I give your body unto the reptiles  
Of the damned, and your soul to nether depths  
Of all.”

Oh! then, methought those slimy reptiles rent  
And tore the flesh from off my bones, leaving  
My soul bare, naked; shiv’ring with Fear’s  
cold,  
Amid Hell’s heat.

Minutes passed like years in this tortured sleep,  
Until, amid unbearable horrors

I awoke to find my sinewy form  
Low bent, hair bleached to snowy whiteness.

Time passes slowly on,  
But yet no rest my soul doth find, such torments  
Gave my Petroleum Dream !











